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HÉLOÏSE AND ABÉLARD

I

WORKS BY GEORGE MOORE

LEWIS SEYMOUR AND SOME WOMEN

A MUMMER'S WIFE

A DRAMA IN MUSLIN

SPRING DAYS

CONFESSIONS OF A YOUNG MAN

ESTHER WATERS

ESTHER WATERS (PLAY)

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THE COMING OF GABRIELLE

HÉLOÏSE AND ABÉLARD

HÉLOÏSE AND ABÉLARD

BY

GEORGE MOORE

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOLUME I

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No. 346

A MADAME X

Héloïse et Abélard fut composé pour célébrer mon amour. Les épreuves sont corrigées, les brouillons au panier, l'encrier est à sec. Erreur! J'en tire une dernière goutte et avec une plume estropiée je vous écris cette petite épître dédicatoire. Je vous prie de l'accepter, Madame, sans trop me chicaner sur un mot qui semblera trop fort à certains sots, pauvres êtres, qui voudraient remplacer le mot amour par celui d'amitié, ne sachant pas que le cœur ne connait que l'amour.

G. M.

HÉLOÏSE AND ABÉLARD

CHAP. I.

PHILIPPE, the Canon's brother, was among the first to enlist in the army that Raymond assembled to rescue the Holy Sepulchre from the Infidel. He was leaving behind him Jeanne, his wife, and his daughter, a child of ten; to both he was devotedly attached, to his wife by memories of a romantic marriage (and to these were added memories of months of care bestowed upon her, for her health was failing), and to his daughter, Héloïse, he was not less attached, a child so unusually intelligent that he had begun to dream of a great future for her (a father's hope takes wing quickly), and he was also leaving his career, for Philippe was a physician of no small repute. He was leaving all that he loved and all those that claimed him, and in the belief that he would not return. But he did not mention his forebodings to the Canon when he repaired to his house in the rue des Chantres to bid him good-bye. For why, he asked himself, should he speak things that would be painful for his brother to hear, wounds and death and burial, things of which he had no certain knowledge, only a vague premonition?

So very little was settled during the meeting of the brothers, who almost without words paced the room or stood by the window overlooking the Seine watching the water flowing past, perplexed by the apparent strangeness of their destinies; for while Philippe was fighting stiff battles with the Saracen, Fulbert would be going to and forth from the rue des Chantres to the Cathedral of Notre-Dame. To offer up the sacrifice of the Mass, Philippe interjected and Fulbert acquiesced, serving God, he said, in different modes, but one true and living God.

The low and irritating ripple of the Seine reached their ears and it seemed to remind the Canon that he preferred the part that he had chosen from the beginning of his life, knowing well that it would secure to him the same circumstance and the same hope always, rather than the adventure that had befallen his brother suddenly and from which there was no escape, for it would be a family dishonour if one member of the family at least did not answer the call—Jerusalem for Christendom. They spoke to each other in snatches of the ships that were assembled in the ports of Marseilles and Toulon to carry the Crusaders to Acre, a lengthy voyage of many weeks even if the winds should prove favourable, and God would see they were; unless, indeed, he wished to try the faith of the Crusaders in their enterprise by delaying them with contrary winds; but God was good, and it was natural that he should wish the city to be given back to the faith for which his Son had perished, nor could the war be a long one. Jerusalem will fall speedily and thou'lt kneel in the Sepulchre, and we shall see each other again, the Canon said. Philippe did not answer him, and the perplexed Canon returned to the window, thinking that if his brother did not come back from the Holy City Jeanne and Héloïse would fall to his charge. I shall have to bring them here to live with me, he said to himself, and the fear grew upon him of daily attendance on an ailing woman, and that the life he had sought and found in the rue des Chantres would be plucked from him, and his house be no longer his own. Even if Jeanne did not live very long, Héloïse and her future would become a business from which he could not escape any more than Philippe could from the Holy Land; for all the choir and the chapter would look upon him with contempt if his whole life were not placed at the disposal of the widow and child of a man who had given his life to the service of Our Lord Jesus Christ. And while Fulbert was thinking of these things Philippe sat on one of the oak chests along the wall that served as seats, all expression having faded from his face, pale at the thought that he might never see his brother again, and Fulbert said to himself: he is thinking that if he should turn round suddenly and take my hands in his he might get a vow from me that his

wife and child shall want for nothing as long as I live. But it will make little difference whether he asks me or not; my life is pledged to his service.

That he should feel so much unwillingness to stand by his sister-in-law alarmed him, and he tried to find consolation in the thought that the irksome task would be approved in the sight of God and in the sight of men and in his own sight because of its irksomeness. For it is no small thing to ask a man to give up his life; God is asking as much from me as he is asking from Philippe; and I will do my duty as Philippe does his. And the Canon vowed to slough the sensual coil when the time came for him to choose between shame and honour. But it might never come; if it did, Philippe would be dead. His brother's footsteps startled him from his reverie and he turned from the window to bid him good-bye abruptly, unable to bear the strain of the parting any longer; he heard the clink of the mail on the staircase, and still seeing the spare figure of the Crusader in his mind's eye, Fulbert could not do else than contrast the narrow, helmeted skull with his own great bald head, its rim of reddish hair rising no higher than the ears, and meditate on his canonical belly swelling under the purple robe, whose rustling silk reminded him of his own increasing vanity.

But we are never at quarrel with ourselves for long, and his thoughts soon passed from Philippe to Jeanne, who could not live more than six months; if so, his care of her could be borne fairly easily, and he began to compose the picture, saying to himself that if he were to sit by her bedside twice a week he would be doing all that could be expected of him. Two visits in the week, he said, I shall hardly be able to manage two; a weekly visit, however, would not conflict with his work in the Cathedral, so he thought, but life is always more elaborate in its processes than we think for, and it fell out that despite his intentions the Canon did not succeed in crossing the Little Bridge more than four times during the three months that Jeanne lingered between life and death. The fourth time he went to Sainte-Geneviève was to hear her last message to her husband, if he should return, and to confer the last sacrament upon her. All hope of saving her is at an end,

he said, on his way home; and a little later, as he passed the Cathedral, he muttered: things have not fallen out as evilly as they might have; I shall only have the girl to contend with, and the hardship of the burden may not prove too great, for Héloïse may be all Philippe thinks she is, and if she be no more than half she deserves education and the best that can be given to her.

Jeanne died even sooner than was expected; she did not outlive the week, and on returning from the funeral he remembered that three learned women had joined the Benedictine convent at Argenteuil lately, and he asked himself as he strolled if he could do better than place Héloïse in their charge. Some carts were going thither next morning; could he do better than avail himself of them? Nothing will be gained by delay, he said to himself, and to his serving-woman: Madelon, I will give thee a letter to the Prioress; and thou'lt take Héloïse to Argenteuil to-morrow. He spoke firmly, for he was afraid that Madelon would raise objections and begin to argue with him, saying that his niece should pass a few days in the rue des Chantres, long enough to recover from the shock of her mother's death, and that Latin and Arithmetic were not like green vegetables, but could wait. All the way down the staircase I shall hear her muttering, he said; she'll make me pay for this in many little ways. And he fell to thinking. But so convinced was he that it would be for Héloïse's good to go straight to the convent without tarrying in his house, that he overruled Madelon, surprising her not a little by his firmness. Never have I seen him so stubborn, she growled, pausing at her kitchen door, uncertain if she should return; and next morning when the carts stopped in the street the Canon heard her still muttering: a fine hurry indeed he is in to get rid of the child; frightened, I suppose, lest anything should come between him and his books. Madelon, the carts are waiting, Canon Fulbert cried up the staircase; Héloïse is waiting, no doubt, expecting thee; the carts will call for her. Madelon continued to mutter, and his ear catching certain words—cruel, selfish old fellow—he began to think that he was no longer master in his own house. But the thought of separating himself from Madelon and throwing

himself upon the charity of a new servant, who, though she might not have the faults that Madelon had, would have other faults, intervened, and the thought of Madelon's dismissal was dropped almost as quickly as it had come. Madelon has her faults, he said; everybody has, none is without faults; all the same, it is strange that she mistrusts me, for she should know that I always act thoughtfully. On listening again, it seemed to him that he heard the words: not even for one night! That is how it seems to her, for she is not able to look ahead; the actual moment in front of her is all that she apprehends. Madelon does not see that if Héloïse were here for one night I should have to keep her several. Why one night rather than two—why not a week? And at the end of a week it would be hard to get her away, for children are propense to acquire habits; and he imagined Héloïse drifting about the house, in and out of the kitchen, dabbling in the selt with the ducks along the river's edge (to the great danger of her life), for to whose care could he confide her? There was no one in the house except Madelon, and Madelon's work occupied all her time. If he kept his niece in the house for a week, she would wish to return to it. He would receive letters asking if she might come for holidays. . . . Holy Virgin! would that packing upstairs never come to an end? And once more he ran up half-a-dozen steps and called to Madelon to hasten, saying: the carts will not wait any longer. Madelon paid no heed to his warnings. It may be, he said to himself, that she hopes to gain her point, thinking that if the carters refuse to wait any longer I shall never summon enough courage again to do what I am doing now. The carters reassured him, and once more he picked up the thread of his thoughts, that servants do not see farther ahead than a day; two or three days at most. If Madelon were a gossip! But he never heard Jeanne complain of Madelon carrying stories to and fro. She had her faults, of course, but she was trustworthy; and the Canon fell to thinking how this excellent woman came into the family. About ten years ago it was, soon after Héloïse was born; he was certain of the year, but could not remember if Madelon had come from Brittany before Héloïse was born or a few weeks later. However, it doesn't matter, he said; what

is certain is that she came hither to suckle Héloïse. Alas! one of the many sad cases of girls led astray. But she had to leave on account of the drying up of her milk, and he recalled Jeanne's despair, how she had come to him to ask if he knew anybody who could replace Madelon. He didn't, but he was glad to overlook Madelon's fault and—— A smile gathered about his lips, but he did not linger unduly over the first years that he and Madelon lived together, but passed on to some years later, when he discovered that Madelon always looked upon herself as his niece's mother. So it was only natural that she should not like Héloïse to be hurried off to a convent the day after her mother's funeral. His thoughts fell once more on the short-sightedness of servants. Governed always, he said, by the seeming need of the moment, unable to weigh and consider the alternatives, whether it would be wiser for her to spend a few idle days in the rue des Chantres or to go to the convent with the impression of her mother's death fresh in her memory, for if she were as Philippe believed her to be, and as himself believed her to be, a child of very rare mind, it would be well to prepare her for the acceptance of the religious life. For outside the religious life, he said, there is nothing but trouble and anxiety, nor is advancement possible except through the Church. It was then, remembering his age (he was fifty), that he asked himself what would become of this orphan at his death. Not many years remained in front of him; ten or fifteen, twenty at the most! His meditation on life's brevity was interrupted by Madelon coming down the stairs with her packages; a great relief it was, and having instructed the carters, he returned into his house soothed, for he knew now of a certainty his life would continue flowing in the same even current for several years at least. By going to the convent, he said, as a child, she will not carry with her any memories of the world, and rubbing his hands cheerfully he continued his thoughts: Madelon's chatter is full of danger; a good woman, but one without foresight, always speaking her mind without knowing that she is speaking it, which would not matter if Héloïse were a common child; a common child might have stayed here for a few days; but being exceptionally quick she would have been influenced, and have gone to the

convent with her memory a store of undesirable thoughts; so there could be no doubt that I acted rightly, none whatever.

But however sure the Canon was at times that he had acted rightly, a doubt rose up from the depths occasionally, and once it almost compelled him to mount his nag and ride to Argenteuil to see his niece. But he had fallen into fat; horse-riding was not to his taste, and as he sat in his chair trying to balance the advantages and the disadvantages that would accrue from a ride to Argenteuil, it occurred to him suddenly that his visit could not fail to remind her of two things: that as a Canon of Notre-Dame he would have money to leave, and that his money would eventually come to her, she being his nearest relative. But he had sent her to the convent the day after her mother's funeral; and for that she thinks harshly of me, he said, and the nuns think the same and maybe have put the thought into her head. A word is enough to poison her mind, and of all a word spoken casually. On the other hand, they might like to keep her; convents are always on the watch to catch a clever girl and the Prioress will understand—— All the same I ought to have asked her to spend her holidays here, and yet . . . His thoughts melted away, and three days after a letter came from the convent that restored to the Canon confidence in his own wisdom. Héloïse was already more proficient in Latin than anybody else in the convent and should prove a great ornament to the Church if it were her lot to be called to the religious life. She will discover a vocation if left undisturbed, he said, and was more than ever certain that he had acted rightly in sending her to Argenteuil and allowing his niece's mind to ripen altogether in the influence of those holy women. And with such thoughts and reflections he continued to cajole his conscience, now and then troubled by a fear that Philippe, on his return from Jerusalem, would think it strange, even harsh, that Héloïse had been left all this time at Argenteuil. It was true that Philippe had sent a letter saying that he approved of putting Héloïse to school at Argenteuil, but the Canon's conscience was not easy; he was afraid that when Philippe returned from Palestine he would be grieved to hear that his brother had not been once to see his charge, nor once sent for her to spend a few days of her

holidays under his roof. I shall tell him that I wished to remove Héloïse from all worldly influences, so that she might discover a vocation in herself. For what would her position be if I were to die suddenly and thou in Palestine? I mean, he continued, addressing his brother's supposed shade, if God chose to ask for thy life.

It was painful to the Canon to contemplate his brother's death, for what was most real in him, most true and fundamental, was his love of Philippe; and when the news came to him that his brother was killed in the siege of Jerusalem, he wrote a letter to the Prioress acquainting her of the fact, saying that he relied upon her to break the news to Héloïse, and to tell her that if he did not come to see her it was because he was too broken-hearted. Not to speak to her of her father would be impossible, and to speak of Philippe was, he said, beyond his power, he would break down; so he begged the Prioress to make these things plain sooner or later to his niece, expressing a hope that she would understand and not judge harshly his absence from her at this terrible moment of their lives. He paused to ask himself if he were finding excuses for not doing things that were inconvenient for him to do. As likely as not he was, for alas! selfishness is the human lot. Be this as it may (he was writing the exact truth so far as he knew it), he could not talk about Philippe to Héloïse. Nor to anybody, he said, springing out of his chair, and going to the kitchen he gave a solemn order to Madelon that she was never to speak his brother's name in his presence; and when his colleagues became aware of his reticence they paid silent respect to the Canon's grief, without, however, giving their approval to this closing up of the heart and treating it as a sort of mortuary-chamber. For we are but houses and require fresh air; ghosts choose deserted houses for their dwelling-places; were remarks that were often made behind the Canon's back. It was also said that the Canon never sought to discover any new fact from the soldiers who were returning from Jerusalem telling stories about everybody.

The Canon was fond of good living, assemblies of his friends and lute-playing, but after Philippe's death his door

was forbidden to all; and the talk about him often was that he sat alone in the evening thinking how Philippe died, and that if he came upon Philippe's name in a book he turned the page. But if he never spoke of Philippe, he was always thinking of his brother, not however as a warrior but as a handsome young man of agreeable mien and bearing, with whom the daughter of a great noble had, against the wishes of her family, run away, and against whom the influence of the family was directed so persistently that Philippe had been obliged to enlist in Raymond's army—— That was the reason, or part of the reason, of Philippe's enlistment, he often said to himself, turning over the leaves of a book. It was not till Madelon told him (in defiance of his order) that it was Philippe who had received the tidings of the whereabouts of the Holy Spear that the Canon began to associate his brother with the clashing of swords in breached walls and the sacking of cities. He was angry with Madelon for mentioning his brother's name, but shrank from telling her again that she must keep it off her tongue. All the same he could not bear to see her with her arms akimbo, talking to him of his brother by the hour. An almost unendurable trial she was, but he was glad she had told him, for now he knew that Philippe was chosen by God; Philippe was therefore with God, and his belief in his brother's spiritual life seemed to unite them both in spirit till the only hours he cared to live were those that he spent thinking of Philippe, despite the fact that these meditations were broken by questions as to whether he was acting exactly as Philippe would wish by leaving his niece in the Argenteuil convent.

On looking up and turning his eyes towards a certain corner of the room one night it seemed to him that the smile had vanished out of Philippe's eyes. She must be now sixteen, going on for seventeen, he said to himself, and sought out the Prioress's letter in the hope that it would again set flowing a pleasant current of meditation; but he had hardly opened it when his brother came out of the corner of the room, and while looking at Philippe the thought came into his mind that perhaps he appeared at this moment so strangely visible because he disapproved of his daughter passing from the school-

room to the novitiate in ignorance of the world, no choice having been given to her. He looked again (he was never sure that he was reading Philippe's face truly), but the apparition had faded; he was now looking into his memory of it and could not rid himself of the thought that Philippe's eyes seemed to protest against the disposal of his daughter to the Church in her first youth. Héloïse, a voice said, was thrust into a convent school at ten years of age, and has seen nobody but the nuns. Never once, Fulbert, hast thou been to see her. Fulbert was not certain with what eyes he saw his brother, nor with what ears he heard the words. Did he see with the mind's eye, did he hear with the mind's ear? He did not know, and tried to attribute the appearance and the voice to nervousness or ill-health. For why should a devoted son of the Church object to his daughter taking the veil? he asked himself, getting back for answer that Philippe did not object to his daughter taking the veil if she were so disposed, but did not like her being tricked into accepting it. I am being driven, he said, as if Philippe's sword were behind me all the time prodding, prodding me in the rue des Chantres, prodding me as I sit over my books reading, prodding me in the Cathedral. I am being compelled at the point of a sword to send Madelon for her. He strove against his conscience as long as he could, but one day in the Cathedral it seemed to him, as he was laying out some vestments, that he could not do else than send Madelon to Argenteuil with instructions that she was to bring Héloïse back with her. He could not understand how it was that he had delayed so long, and then of a sudden he began to feel that he could not interrupt the pleasant tenor of his life by the introduction of another person into it; and no sooner had he come to a new resolve not to send for Héloïse than he began to feel that he could not bear any longer the anguish of his conscience, and that the only way to end it was to send for Héloïse. It is a long time since we have seen Héloïse, he said one day to Madelon, turning back as he was going to leave his house.

Troth and faith, it is a long time since you have seen her, wellnigh six years, Madelon answered. But I sent thee with some presents last year. I went myself, Canon, bringing her

a cake last year. Now of what are you thinking? Madelon asked, standing before him, her arms, as usual, akimbo. Of sending me to fetch her back? If you aren't, it's time you were! Be sure of one thing, that I'm not asking for thy thoughts on this subject or any other, the Canon answered, and Madelon began to laugh and the Canon walked out of the house. But though he could leave Madelon, he could not escape from the torment within him, and at the end of the week he said: the die is cast; Madelon must go for her. And next day at the same hour he stood at his window hearing the cart groaning through the rutted street on its way to the Great Bridge, almost helpless, thinking that his life had come to an end, but unable to do otherwise than he had done. It had to be, he said to himself, and I couldn't have acted otherwise, even if I knew that Héloïse would refuse to return to Argenteuil at the end of the week. She will go back willingly if she doesn't stay too long, and a three days' visit will be enough. But Madelon will not hear of less than a week, not a day less will satisfy her, and six evenings with a prattling girl seemed an unmerited punishment. Good-bye, dear books; good-bye, dear friends, he cried, gathering up his books. The separation is a great one, but peace of mind is better than books; without it books are of no avail. I shall return to you as I once was, never to part again, he added, as he locked his books into a cupboard and fell into a chair, himself seeming to himself the unhappiest man in the world.

CHAP. II.

BUT time does not stand still, he said, starting from his chair, because I am unhappy; I must hasten or I shall be late for vespers. Now what can be keeping them? he asked himself as he hastened up the rue des Chantres. Argenteuil is but six miles from Paris, and they might walk as many in a couple of hours if Madelon were not so fat . . . like myself; and should they meet a cart on the way back it will bring them hither in an hour and a half. I shall find them for sure in the rue des Chantres when I return.

And resting his head against the carvings of his stall, which he could do without hurting himself, his hood being comfortably padded, the Canon gave his thoughts to the difference there would be between the present week and the preceding week, and again between the present week and the week that was to come. For Héloïse would not stay more than a week with him. And a week's soon over, he added thoughtfully, as he left the Cathedral, stopping to admire the outlines of the street, as was his custom to do. Spreading, he said, into great bulk as the houses ascend in overhanging, jutting storeys, an architecture following the whims of the builders, telling a varied tale that I never weary of reading. And his thoughts going back to Roman times, he meditated that if the Moderns had lost skill in literature they had acquired an architecture that was all their own. Virgil would understand the beauty of my street, though the peaked gables would seem strange to him at first; and he could not help thinking that Virgil would like a certain corner house with windows overlooking the street and windows overlooking the Seine, however little it might remind him of a Roman villa. He began to count his steps. A dozen more and it will come into view, he said, and was disappointed to find that he had miscalculated the distance by three steps. But never had his house presented so charming an appearance as it did at this moment, standing amid strong lights and shadows. What a pretty house, he muttered; prettier than I thought for; and he remained for some moments forgetful of Héloïse, lost in admiration of the cut-stone façade and the appearance of the balcony high up under the impending roof, where Madelon dried her linen. She has not a great deal of washing this week, he said; and I hope the sheets she will put upon Héloïse's bed will be aired. But whatever her faults are, and they are many, she does not forget these things. They ought to be back by this from Argenteuil; and he hastened up the flight of steps that led to his house and kept it free from the Seine, which in winter flowed into the street if the thaw was sudden. At the top of the steps was the front door, and on pushing it open the Canon found himself in a passage, and facing him was the staircase leading to the first storey. No

doubt Madelon is showing her round the house, and he ran up the stairs. No, she is not here, he said, looking round the room known as the Canon's company-room. They must be in the parlour. And he ran down to the room in which he had his meals and which served him also as a sitting-room in the winter, fuel not being plentiful enough to have fires in more than two rooms. No, they are not here; she must have taken Héloïse into my study. And as he expected, he found Madelon and Héloïse waiting for him in his study, having no more than half-an-hour ago returned from Argenteuil.

We have not touched your books, Canon, so there is no reason to look round the room, Madelon cried, jumping to her feet, a small Breton woman somewhere between thirty and forty, nearer forty than thirty, a sack tied in the middle with string, whose two rather witty little eyes justified her sharp tongue and lighted up her brown face so pleasantly that the low, ill-shaped forehead and the coarse black hair dragged up from it were overlooked. Nothing has been touched, we just sat down quiet as two children in a story book; but I have been telling Héloïse of your Latin books stored away in those cupboards. The Canon's face darkened, but Madelon, quite undaunted, turned to Héloïse saying: thou seest how black he is getting, but we are used to these little changes in the rue des Chantres; thou mustn't let thine uncle frighten thee; always remember that his bark is worse than his bite. At which words the Canon's feet began to move angrily, and thinking she had said enough Madelon hastened through the door leading from the Canon's study into the kitchen. The Canon called her back, but she did not heed the order; he was about to follow her, but remembering suddenly that his niece was present, he stopped. Madelon has been with me for many years, so long that she forgets herself and speaks to me as if—— A devoted servant, Héloïse interrupted, who thinks of no one but you, uncle, so do not be angry with her. Fulbert barely heard, for at that moment it seemed to him that he could not bear any longer with Madelon's familiarity. Insolent familiarity, he muttered, and for a moment he seemed as if he were of a mind to follow his servant into the kitchen; and thinking that if he did so he would take her by the arm

and put her out of the house, Héloïse said: uncle, I have not been in your house half-an-hour, but you will not think it an impertinence if I tell you that Madelon's words are mere words, not worth a second thought. I have not been in your house—— caught the angry Canon's ear, and he stood looking at his niece, whom he was beginning to see, his anger having prevented him from seeing her till now. And half conscious of his rudeness in not speaking to her before, yet unable to command his thoughts, he stood looking at his almost forgotten niece, seeing in the first glance a small, thin girl, whose bright dark face, full of youth's pretty colouring, began to lessen his aversion to his visitor. It is easy to see why the nuns thought highly of her, he reflected; a wide brow and grey, wistful eyes that tell a taste for learning. But after speaking to her for a little while the thought came into his mind that her pale, idealistic eyes told of something more than a taste for lessons, and he fell to thinking of his niece's thick brown hair combed into smooth braids and rolled into a knot above the nape of a fine upright neck, for this tire showed to advantage the line of a shapely head. He liked the long blue robe she wore, with sleeves tight at the wrists, and the satchel hanging by cords from an embroidered girdle, and an interest in his niece began to awaken in him. After speaking to her again for a little while a strange discrepancy in her face claimed his attention, and he said: her large, loose mouth does not match her eyes. But whom does she take after? Her face droops at the chin like Philippe's and—— Madelon tells me that your closets are full of books. May I look at your books, uncle? Without waiting for an answer she danced rather than walked across the room and picked up a book that the Canon had overlooked. She breaks into speech like a bird, he said to himself, a ringing voice like her mother's, the same alert step; and he began to regret that he had made his niece's acquaintance after so many years in the midst of a sordid quarrel with Madelon, and to blot out any unfavourable opinion that she might have formed of him, he said: it is difficult to keep one's temper sometimes. Madelon at times—— Forget her, uncle, or you will lose your temper again. A reproof this was, and embarrassed he stood looking into

Héloïse's far-away eyes. So thou hast come at last to the rue des Chantres, Fulbert said, and not sorry to leave thy convent for a while? What answer do you think I should make to you, uncle? Would it please you to hear that I was happy in the convent but am very glad to be in Paris with you and Madelon? What a pretty house you have. I had almost forgotten it, or had taken it all for granted more likely, for I was but a little thing when I came here one day with mother. Do you remember, uncle? Yes, I do, and it is odd that thou shouldst speak to me about my house, or rather it is not odd at all, for as I returned from the Cathedral it struck me as being a very pretty house. But has Madelon shown thee our company-room, or what was once a company-room? No, uncle; we have only just arrived. This room is my study, said Fulbert, and the room on the other side of this wall, the room off the hall, is the room in which I have my meals. Supper is at eight. I suppose thou wilt have supper with me, Héloïse? Héloïse restrained a smile, and the words that rose to her lips were: I suppose I shall, unless I am going to bed supperless. Come and I'll show thee the house, for I see that thou hast an eye for a house, he continued, speaking like one who desires to please. Two windows, she said, as they passed out of the study into the living-room; and both looking out on to the street. Without two windows the room would be very dark, the Canon replied; but the windows in the convent are glazed, aren't they? And she answered: I think that more light comes through your glass than through ours. The words—through ours—reassured Fulbert and predisposed him to admire Héloïse as she ascended the stairs, and to foresee a future abbess in her. Her gait is too brisk, but time will correct that, he said to himself, and to her at the head of the stairs: here is thy bedroom, niece; while thou'rt here, he added, and opened a door, saying: here is the company-room, or used to be, for of late years I find my books better company than my fellow-canons.

He expected her face to tell him that she must not wear out her welcome, but her face did not tell him anything; his hints passed unheeded or were not perceived enough to check her admiration of the really handsome room in which she found

herself—a long room occupying the full length of the house, with a vast fireplace and chimney-piece, from which she withdrew her eyes reluctantly. On turning from the chimney-piece, walls stretched with a faded silk, old rose, met her eyes, and on raising her eyes she saw a ceiling prettily composed of gaily painted joists. You have a handsome room, uncle; and had I one like it I should never feel inclined to leave it; whereupon she passed her eyes over the furniture, which was spare, leaving plenty of space for the company to walk about. Oak chests that served as seats stood against the walls, and tall oak cupboards with long iron hinges and elaborate locks and keys interested and detained Héloïse, and when she turned from them it was to admire the great oaken table, with carved stools about it. And all this oak furniture was shining in the quiet light diffused through the round windows, filled in with thick glass like the room on the ground floor. What room is this? Héloïse asked, going towards the door. A guest room, the Canon said; no one has slept in it yet, but if it be to thy taste—— I like my room at the head of the stairs, she answered, and walked over to the window that overlooked the Seine. Why, there is the Seine, and bordered with groves of willows and poplars almost like Argenteuil.

Paris was more like Argenteuil in my spring days, Fulbert replied; and they stood together at the window talking of the land on the right bank, now the Lombard quarter. It had gained that name from the number of Italian merchants that had settled there. May I have a table, a small one, uncle? See if you can spare me one, one that I can put in the window, for while I am with you I should like to read there. My house seems to have taken thy fancy, niece, Fulbert answered. It has, indeed, uncle, but may I have the table, and will you lend me your books to read? Lend my books! the Canon replied; young girls are not careful with books; and then he added, as if he did not wish to exhibit himself in too selfish a light on the day of her return from Argenteuil: we shall see; we shall see. Thou'rt fond of reading? I hear that speaking Latin and writing it come easy to thee, so the nuns tell me. Héloïse did not answer, for she was beginning to feel averse

from her uncle, and the thought had just come into her mind that if he would not lend her his books, she would ask Madelon to give her needles and wool and begin a piece of tapestry. But why should he think she would crumple the leaves of his books? Why speak of the nuns' praise of her Latin with contempt? She was beginning to dislike her uncle, and had resolved not to speak till he spoke to her, however long the silence. Goose, said he, as they descended the stairs. Dost smell it, niece? Yes, I can indeed, Héloïse answered. Goose is an excellent bird if properly cared for, the Canon replied, in a tone that helped her to overlook his partial refusal to lend her his books. An excellent bird, he repeated, as none knows better than Madelon, who was a goose-girl in Brittany before she came to live with your mother; and if we were not so short of room, if we had a garden, we might keep some poultry. It would amuse her to look after poultry, and carry her thoughts back to days that have gone. According to her the goose is rarely killed at the right moment, when the fat is healthy and plentiful, but she tries to make the best of the geese that the market supplies, and the bird that comes so odoriferously from underneath the door of my study has been hanging in the larder under Madelon's special care for the last three days, in the hope that thou'rt partial to goose, and of all, that thou'lt not keep the bird waiting. I wonder, uncle, if she would like me to go to the kitchen to help her with her cooking? I don't think that she would like it at all; she says it always tries her temper to have anybody in the kitchen when she is preparing the dinner. But Madelon and I, uncle—— Héloïse stopped on seeing her uncle's face darken, and to pass over an awkward moment she said: I will spend the hour before dinner by the river, watching the swallows floating up and down.

It must have been something in the temper of her voice that reminded Fulbert that he was not receiving his niece with the courtesy which she had a right to expect from him, and to make amends he proposed that they should go for a little walk before dinner. Dinner, he called to Madelon, will not be ready for nearly an hour, and on hearing that she hoped they would be back in three-quarters, he said: we shall have time to walk

to the Cathedral and round the King's Gardens. But come first to the river. So pleasant was the sunset that they walked bareheaded, admiring the stillness of the evening, unbroken except when a solitary rook flew overhead and cawed, or a long narrow leaf detached itself and fell through the branches of the willows into the stream. The Seine flows here almost silently, as it does at Argenteuil, said Héloïse; whispering as it goes by as if afraid that somebody should hear its secret. No river flows more silently: a deep, narrow stream, more suited for navigation than the Loire, the Canon answered her; however dry the summer may be there is water enough in the Seine for the biggest boats to come up to Paris; the Seine is the source of much wealth to Paris. It was the Seine that brought us the rich merchants, and he pointed to the Lombard quarter, which he had already shown her from the room in which she had asked if she might sit and read. Few of those houses were built before thy schooldays, Héloïse, if I remember right; others are building, the city is extending on both sides, and it is by the Little Bridge that hundreds of students come to the Cathedral cloister to attend lectures. The left bank is known as the Latin quarter; because of the bad Latin that the students speak there, he added, laughing. And the bridge that we are now standing on is known as the Great Bridge—you may remember it. It allows the merchants to come to our services at Notre-Dame without enduring the hardship of the ferry. But, said Héloïse, the right bank has two churches, Saint-Germains-l'Auxerrois and Saint-Gervais. The Canon smiled, Héloïse thought a little ironically, and after complimenting her upon her memory he spoke of the selfishness of the prelacy of these two churches. It is hardly to be believed, he said, that men could be so selfish, yet a great deal of opposition was raised to the building of the bridge; the case of the ferryman was put forward, but the cause at the back, the real opposition to the bridge, was the fear that the bridge would rob the churches yonder of their congregations, a fear (again Héloïse saw the ironical smile appear upon her uncle's lips) which has partly been justified by events. After all, uncle, the churches yonder would like to retain their congregations. Fulbert did not answer, and for some time they loitered

listening to the whispering river, watching its eddies curling almost invisibly on the deep current, till that sense of sadness inseparable from a river turned them away from it, and they were glad to find themselves again in the rue des Chantres.

The Canon drew his hood over his head and bade Héloïse do likewise, and she admired the storeyed houses, now so visible against the sky, and the purple-robed ecclesiastics passing each other with ceremonious smiles and salutes. Is the street as full at all times as it is now? Héloïse asked. I never knew it quieter than it is now, the Canon replied. In the morning the cries of the tradespeople calling their wares keep one from sleep if one is not accustomed to noise. A group of students emerging suddenly from a wine-shop, singing and shouting and falling over each other, rough gambols that bewildered the peaceable passenger, provoked the Canon into mild expostulation. All countries send their students to us; Paris is becoming not only a centre of commerce but also of learning; but our students are not only boisterous, they are dangerous at nightfall—— The anecdote which he was about to tell was interrupted by the sudden appearance of Notre-Dame, a long, low Romanesque church with round arches and two towers, and after expounding upon it in terms of admiration the Canon said: Paris is not only the centre of commerce and science; Paris is also the centre of Christianity, in one sense more even than Rome, for it was we that gathered an army to send into Palestine to win the Sepulchre of Our Lord from the Infidel. England came to the aid of Christendom later. Paris is the birthplace of ideas, he added, and they stood at gaze, seeing a city of a thousand cries projecting its grey profile into the sunset; a multitude of towers and spires and thronging roofs above streets so narrow that they were already in twilight. Paris has many churches, Héloïse said; I see them all around me. Not so many churches as cries, the Canon answered; but no city equals Paris in the beauty and the number of the churches that we see from where we stand. Grouped about Notre-Dame like chickens about a hen, Héloïse said, and approving the remark, the Canon compared the long, narrow island to the carcass of a stranded ship. And Héloïse

said: but why stranded, uncle? For since commerce and science are collected in Paris it were surely a pity to represent Paris as a wreck. As a ship at anchor then, he answered, with a slight irritation in his voice, which Héloïse interpreted to mean that for the future she must not call his similes into question. To atone for her indiscretion she begged of him to tell her the names of the churches on the left bank, and whither led the Little Bridge. He answered that it led to the Abbey of Sainte-Geneviève. How nobly, she said, it crowns the hill-top. In the plain about the hill the students find lodgings, for the city cannot contain them all, the Canon said; and they come into Paris by this bridge to attend the lectures of Champeaux, the great Realist, and Abélard, who—— But that is another matter and one that would lead us from the pleasant contemplation of our churches. In the morning the air is alive with their bells, like larks singing aloft, I have often thought. The bells of Saint-Germains-l'Auxerrois and Saint-Gervais answer the bells of Notre-Dame, and the bells of Notre-Dame answer them, and in the distance are heard the bells of the old Abbey of Saint-Germains des Prés; nor is that all, for out of the dim west comes to us in the still morning the sound of the bells of the church of Saint-Victor; many other churches, too—fifteen in all. But it seems to me now, Héloïse, that if we remain talking about churches any longer we shall hear complaints from Madelon that all the trouble she has taken with the goose in thine honour has been wasted. The churches are tokens to every eye that Paris is a centre of religion, and having said that, Héloïse, let us return to our goose, for in this world little things are often as important as great; indeed, sometimes great things would not be accomplished without the help of little things, so let us give thanks for our goose.

And Héloïse, finding a cheerfulness in her uncle that she had not suspected, began to hope that her visit to Paris might not prove a failure after all. Be this as it may, the goose awaited them and hunger indisposed them from further chatter as they walked through the crowd of prelates and clerks that still filled the rue des Chantres.

We have not stayed away longer than we said we would,

the Canon cried, throwing open the kitchen door. You have come back none too soon, Madelon answered. And none too late; I wouldn't say that five minutes earlier—— But five minutes to a goose—— answered the Canon. Five minutes to a goose is as much as five minutes to a man, Madelon replied; and for Héloïse, who may not enjoy goose as much as we do, I should have liked to have had a plate of gudgeons, but if something isn't done to catch them glittering birds for ever flying up and down the river, we shan't know a plate of gudgeons when we see them.

Héloïse and I have no stomach for anything but the goose, so bring it quickly and tell us what thy tart is. If gudgeons are so rare that there are seldom any in the market, Madelon answered, we have a finer share of honey this year than for many a year past; the bees have been good to us if no one else has. The bees have always been good to men, the Canon answered, in the days of the great Virgil as to-day. He praised bees as no man has ever praised them before. And would have praised them again were he here to share with you the tart I have prepared for you, honey and cream, cream as good as I have ever whipped. Now what do you be saying to my goose? she asked, her little short arms akimbo on her podgy hips, seeming to relish the goose as much as the Canon and his niece, who both had their mouths full. Be sure to fill thy mouth very full, niece, said the Canon, else thou'lt fail to get the taste of it. It is good, Madelon, as good as thyself, which is saying much. The Canon has returned to his humour, Madelon answered. The bird eats tender, don't he? and Héloïse, after her long journey, must be hungry; so am I. Argenteuil and back is a long journey for the day, and my teeth will fasten lovingly on what you leave behind of that goose. We shall leave plenty, the Canon answered. But I don't see thee drinking, Héloïse; and the goose must not allow us to forget the wine. Madelon filled their cups and said: now is there anything that you want? You have bread enough, and don't neglect my spinach, for it was cooked in the finest butter, and the cauliflower too. I have done my best, but the best is not much when one has been away three parts of the day backwards and forwards to Argenteuil. All the same, I

hope my supper will not fall short of the suppers they gave thee in the convent. Ah, they look after their bellies in those convents! and I must look to my honey tart. In a few minutes she was back again, the tart in her hands, proud of the show that it made on the table. I see my goose has received a hearty welcome from you both, but two legs remain, which will do well for Madelon, and there are pickings elsewhere. I am as hungry as you were, and will run away with the goose. Madelon's pastry is excellent, the Canon said, his eyes filled with memories of tarts eaten in the years gone by. Hast thou ever eaten a better one? How flaky it is; wilt have some more? Héloïse would have liked a second helping but she thought her uncle might like a third, and conquered the temptation. There are nuts on the table, and apples and pears, but there is no fruit like grapes. Look at this bunch, the small, white sweet-water grapes that grow nowhere but in France; these have come up from Fontainebleau. And when each had finished a great bunch he said: they eat well, don't they? Bread and grapes go well together, and none bakes better than Madelon. Do you always sup like to-day, uncle? Héloïse asked, and the Canon answered somewhat tartly that the supper she had eaten was prepared for her: let us go upstairs, he said.

So that he might better consider Madelon's supper, the Canon lay back in his chair outstretched, his toes in the air, his fat, heavy hands clasped over his belly, and Héloïse bethought herself of his books as a safe subject for discussion, to be broached as soon as he was rested. He is not yet done with his supper, she said to herself, for the Canon had just roused himself from his chair and was returning to it from the table, whither he had gone for a handful of nuts and a tankard of wine; and he sat cracking and skinning the nuts and drinking large draughts in silence, till Héloïse began to think it would be wise for her to plead the fatigue of her journey and ask leave to retire to her room. Once more the Canon rose, and returning from the table to her, a full tankard in his hand, he began, to her very great surprise, to talk to her of her mother. Thou'rt like her in many ways, he said: in thy voice and gait. Jeanne was a good woman, he muttered, half to Héloïse and half to himself; a good woman, a very good

woman. Wives usually love their husbands, but my mother loved hers more deeply than many women, and sacrificed all things to marry father. The words passed her lips incontinently, and no sooner were they gone from her than she held her breath, frightened, remembering that Madelon had told her that she must not speak of her father. So it was to her great surprise, and to his own, that Fulbert began to talk of his brother, like one whose mind has been relieved of a great weight. It seemed as if he almost enjoyed talking of Philippe, or was it, she asked herself, that he could not do else but to tell me of my father, or is it the wine that has loosened his tongue? Indifferent as to the cause of her uncle's sudden loquacity, she listened eagerly to his telling of her family history, that some twenty years ago the Comte and Comtesse of an old Breton family came to him, Canon Fulbert, to ask him if he knew any doctor who would go and live in Brittany in special attendance on Madame la Comtesse, who was in delicate health. A valetudinarian is my wife, he said, and I answered him truthfully that the only doctor I knew was my own brother, a young man of great repute, one excellently well learned in every branch of his craft, but a young man who was once, I was careful to add, fond of hunting and falconry. These sports are out of his mind long since, so you need not be afraid that—— And while I was looking for the words the Comte found them for me: afraid that your brother will be distracted from his duty towards the Comtesse by his love of hunting? Something of that kind was in my mind, no doubt, Comte, but—— I can't recall what answer I made the Comte, but I am sure he answered me: your brother will be able to combine both science and sport, for in our forests there are wolves and boars, and I have hounds and peregrin falcons and goshawks in great numbers. Your brother will be appreciated by us both, Canon Fulbert, he said, for the Comtesse likes to hear that she is not as ill as she thinks she is from time to time. A woman's imagination, you know, Canon; the confessional must have taught you much about women. That is how he spoke, and I told him that Philippe was fond of singing and playing the lute. Better and better, the Comte said, for the Comtesse loves music. I must meet your brother. It was

not in the course of things that I should say nay to the Comte; but I could not put aside the thought that if Philippe were to follow the Comte to Brittany the end of it would be—— I didn't know what the end would be, but scented danger, as well I might, Philippe being a young man and the Comtesse still a young woman, not yet forty. So I sought to dissuade him, saying that he would not be wise to abandon his patients for a sinecure; and many other things of the same kind I said, but to no avail. And now that I come to consider it after many years it seems to me that the Comte could not have failed to take heed of my warning if he hadn't been what he was, a feeble man, altogether in his wife's power and blind to the danger which I foresaw and which was not long in coming, for very soon, at the end of the year, it was plain to everybody that the Comtesse was in love with Philippe. But thy father, Héloïse, was not of the shameless sort who eat a man's bread and betray him with his wife, and from what fell out afterwards it's easy to guess how hard Philippe's life must have been in the Castle, lute-playing and hawking with the Comtesse, always by her side, and her private physician at home, consulted upon ailments that did not exist and having to close his eyes to the one ailment which he could cure, her love of him. Philippe would have fallen—for sooner or later a man is bound to fall to a woman if she persists and no other woman comes to save him. The woman that came to save Philippe, Héloïse, was thy mother, the Comtesse's own daughter. Now whether thy mother knew of the passionate story unravelling day by day before her eyes, or whether it was for love of thy father or a desire to save her mother, we shall never know. My belief is that woman never loved a man more truly than thy mother loved her husband and that she knew nothing of her mother's shameless passion. The Coetlogons are great nobles, and my brother would not have spoken to Jeanne of his love for her had he not been told that he would be accepted if he did. I don't know from whom he had the news, and it is no great matter; enough that he learnt it and that the marriage took place in a forest in a hermit's hut. Once married always married (thou knowest that, Héloïse, for thou'rt well brought up), but thy grandmother didn't

think like that, not she, but of revenge only, and thy mother was put out of the Castle without money being given to her, in the dress that she wore and none other being allowed to her. The Canon could not continue the story without going to the table for more wine, and when he came back he began to tell of the lovers' journey to Paris on foot and their arrival at his house. A poor creature thy grandfather, Héloïse, never daring to say nay to his wife, and believing her story, the old story of Potiphar's wife. This is how it was, and the Duke of Brittany, Huet IV., to please the Comte expelled thy father from the duchy. Not altogether a bad man, the Duke, for when thou wast born, Héloïse, he tried to bring about a reconciliation. Thy grandfather would have been glad to see his daughter and his grandchild, but thy grandmother couldn't forgive; a hard woman, Héloïse, thy grandmother was, a harlot at heart and in practice, too, and cruel in her lust. The Coetlogons, said she, that marry beneath them are no longer worthy of the name.

Thy mother proved herself a true Coetlogon by never complaining of her poverty, and—listen to me, Héloïse—I don't believe she ever looked across the table at thy father putting the question to herself: was Philippe worth the sacrifice that I made for him? A good woman, as good as any I have known who parted from her husband, when he joined the standard to rescue the Holy Sepulchre from the Infidel, telling him to go and do his duty, not an easy thing for a woman to say to a man like Philippe. Ah! to do one's duty; I tried to do mine by thee, Héloïse, and hope that I did it. Now what was I saying? We were standing by this window watching the Seine flowing past, an emblem of our lives, when Philippe came to bid me good-bye; for, my dear Héloïse, we are but eddies in a great current; thou'rt too young to have thought of these things, but as we get on in life . . . Ah, well, thy father and I loved each other. Be to them as if they were thine own, he seemed to say. Why he didn't speak the words I have no means of knowing; why should I? for thou must see that the emotion of parting with one's brother is beyond words, and we parted without many words, never to see each other again. That is as God willed it. I loved thy father so dearly that it was painful to me to hear his name spoken; my friends

respected my grief, it was never spoken in my presence, nor by me till now. And it was lest it might not be his will to see thee an abbess and head of a great community that I sent for thee, though I may be wronging my brother by thinking such a thing. A good Catholic, thy father, good son of the Church, laid down his life for it. Three learned women had joined the convent of Argenteuil, the Prioress, Mother Ysabeau and the nun that had a baby three years ago—her name has slipped out of my head—— Sister Paula, Héloïse interrupted. The Canon acquiesced that it was of her he was thinking. And my hope, he said, has always been that thou shouldst discover in thyself a vocation for the religious life, that I was doing thy father's will in sending thee to Argenteuil. But one is never sure one is doing right; my point is——

They could hear the low ripple of the Seine going by, and Fulbert did not break the silence, hoping that Héloïse would break it with the words: uncle, I have found the vocation that you would have me find, and hope that you will live long after I have been elected Prioress of the convent of Argenteuil. But Héloïse said nothing, and after trying to read her thoughts through her eyes the Canon continued: it may be thou hast not heard that it was thy father who pointed out the Spear to Raymond and jumped into the trench saying: all wounds shall be cured by its touch and all evils disappear. I didn't know that my father was the finder of the Spear, and am overjoyed. The news that it was being brought to France in a ship reached the convent; we have often spoken about it as we sat at our work in the cloister. Asking thyself, perchance, Héloïse, why thine uncle never came to see thee, never sent thee a letter, and to all appearances had forgotten thee? No, uncle. Sometimes I did think it strange, but I think that I always knew that there were reasons. I'm glad of that, Héloïse; my anxiety to see thee a great abbess, perhaps of Sainte-Geneviève or some greater convent, kept me away, and the nuns writing to say that thou wast their best pupil; and perhaps I thought too much of thee as a great abbess, mayhap was too ambitious for thee.

And so he talked on, saying things that he would wish to

leave unsaid, but he could not help speaking, though he felt that by saying these things he was putting to the hazard all his fine schemes for Héloïse's welfare. But since he had sent for her she must be allowed to chose between the world and religion, and that was why he must speak to her of the nobles who came up to Paris from the provinces at Easter. But Easter is six months hence, Héloïse interjected, and the Canon could find no more subtle answer than: quite true, I had forgotten. To retrieve his mistake he added: but at Easter thou'lt return hither if thou'rt in doubt, and, my dear Héloïse, believe me, it shall be according to thy good wishes whether thou shalt accept or reject the world. But if I return to the convent I hope you will not be kept away by scruples lest I should be tempted to say: uncle, have me back in the rue des Chantres. It has often seemed to me that I could do well enough in the religious life as it is practised in the convent at Argenteuil, for no one is detached there from the world more than it is her lot to be. The Canon was tempted to ask in what measure the nuns were detached from life, but he was beginning to notice a certain thickness in his speech and that his tongue ran away with him, so to speak. It might be that he had drunk more wine than usual, or it might well be that Madelon had substituted a headier wine than he was used to, in honour of Héloïse's return, without warning him; and a little annoyed with himself, and perhaps a little with Madelon, he began to speak of the fatigue of the journey to Argenteuil. Madelon has been there and back and has already gone to bed. What thinkest thou, niece——? His eyelids fell over his eyes. He is asleep, she said, and began to ask herself what she should do in the event of his not awakening. As she sat considering whether she should sit and watch by him or steal away to her bed, his eyelids raised themselves slowly and he started to his feet. It must be bed-time; Héloïse, forgive me if I seemed to have fallen asleep; it was but an appearance. I heard thine every word. Good-night to thee. Héloïse, I have had a long day's work at the Cathedral, a great deal of unnecessary work, for So-and-so (I cannot remember his name for the moment, but it doesn't matter, I am too sleepy to think). I was saying—— Don't trouble, uncle, to fatigue

your brain. No, no, it's no fatigue, I'll get it out; that fellow likes work for its own sake, a thing that I hope I shall never do. But I have enjoyed my evening. Yes, I have; you understand me, I'm telling thee that I've enjoyed my evening. We shall still see each other again, so perhaps it's just as well not to say everything, to leave something over for to-morrow evening. To-morrow thou'lt tell me about the books they gave thee to read.

CHAP. III.

AFTER helping her uncle downstairs to his bedroom Héloïse returned to hers at the top of the stairs, perplexed by the reasons her uncle gave for never having been to the convent to see her and his refusal to lend her his books. She lay awake thinking what manner of man he was, only to forget him in the sway of a sudden memory of her mother's romantic marriage to a young physician, and her thoughts returning from Palestine to Brittany she recalled her memories of her father, associating him with many little facts that she had heard from her uncle, his love of falconry and his love of her mother, a Coetlogon. As the story came from her uncle's lips she had barely apprehended its meaning, but now lying in her bed it became clear to her; it was nothing less than a mother coming between her daughter and her daughter's lover, striving to undo love with lust. How terrible! And failing in her wicked endeavour, this woman, her grandmother, had never ceased to avail herself of the great influence of the Coetlogons against her father, driving him in the end out of France to Palestine, and no doubt rejoicing in his death. How terrible! And then her thoughts passing from these sins of long ago she began to ask herself if she were her mother's true daughter, or set more store than her mother had done on the lineage and the power of the Coetlogons. She had barely heard the name before this evening and knew no more of them than that she was allied on her mother's side to this great family. For her mother had not told her the story, out of shame, no doubt. Was she less spirited and adventurous than her mother? She knew nothing of herself but that she was

good at her lessons, and fell to thinking in a sudden mood of sadness that if the nuns had heard her uncle's story they would have gone away chortling, asking if mother and daughter were ever more different. One runs out of a castle to marry her lover in a forest, the other prefers a pile of books to all else. She was sure that that was what the nuns would have said if they had heard the story, and the old joke would have been put on her again, that she couldn't go to the village to see Sister Paula's baby, so deep was she in St. Augustine. But she had not said anything of the kind and had been to the village to see the baby once, which was enough, for she couldn't find time always to be running to the village and was as weary of the baby as of the joke, and sometimes thought that all this talk about the baby was worse than having one. It even seemed to her that all this curiosity about the baby's father was not a little prurient. It possessed them all; even the school children in her charge had begun to ask her questions: had the baby been found under a gooseberry bush, or was it a currant bush? Her thoughts ran on incontinently, all the talk of the children coming up in her mind. Will you tell us, Héloïse, who found the baby? Everybody says it was Sister Paula, and if she found it does not the baby belong to her much more than it does to the Prioress or the Sub-Prioress? Nuns, she answered, do not have babies. And the children replied: why do nuns not have babies? Because nuns say their prayers and have learned their lessons well, she said, not knowing what else to say, but rued for her words, for the children began very soon afterwards to make a false application of them, thinking, perchance, that if they said their prayers thoughtlessly and failed to learn their lessons they, too, would find babies certainly under the gooseberry bushes in the garden.

It was very unfair of the nuns to think that she was not like her mother, but merely an earnest girl who was fond of her books, caring to match St. Augustine's Latin against St. Jerome's more than anything else, and to argue by the hour with Sister Josiane whether rhymed Latin was more beautiful than unrhymed. She had thoughts for these things and always would have. Why not indeed? For it was no shame surely

to strive after a good Latinity. Surely not. Nor did it follow that because she didn't care to gossip about Sister Paula's baby, she might not outdo her mother's adventure in the forest if it befell her to meet a man like her father; and then contrasting her mother's marriage with Sister Paula's sin, she fell to thinking that Sister Paula's baby was a mere fact, like her uncle's tipsiness. Nuns did not drink as much as priests, but even nuns were different after wine than they were before; nor was her uncle the first prelate to drink too much wine, nor would he be the last, nor was Sister Paula the first woman to transgress the moral law. And turning over restlessly on her pillow she asked herself if Sister Paula was going to keep her awake all night. And folding her arms and closing her eyes she availed herself of all the known remedies to produce sleep. The sheep were counted as they jumped through the gap, and she tried to put a spell upon her brain with the words: go to sleep, go to sleep, go to sleep. But sleep seemed farther than ever from her eyelids, and she caught herself thinking again of Sister Paula, saying to herself that she hoped the Sister would not transgress again and that the baby's father would repent; she hoped, too, that her uncle would repent, and not drink too much wine again, and said a prayer that he might be given strength to keep himself from it.

A few minutes later she caught herself thinking that she would prefer him to give way to wine rather than that he should refuse to lend her his books. For why had he done this? she asked herself, in a tone that was almost one of anguish, adding that I would turn down the leaves and soil them. Now why did he say such hurtful things of one of whom he knew nothing? Would it not have been better for him to allow her to read and watch her, and at the slightest sign of carelessness to take the book out of her hand?

And it was while grieving over her uncle's unjust suspicions that she had no care for books that she fell asleep. On awaking it seemed to her that she must have been asleep for a long while. But the room was dark, so she could not have been asleep more than an hour or two. Some noise in the house had awakened her, and she lay listening eagerly, afraid that a robber was within doors, that somebody was on the stairs. At

last the awful silence was broken. Was somebody coming in or was it merely her clothes falling from the chair on which she had thrown them? Sounds seemed to come from every side, and in the streets voices came nearer and then died away; voices collected and then divided. Was she in dream or in reality? She did not know, and as the dream dissolved she lay staring through the darkness of the room, unable to escape from an extraordinary mental clarity in which everything was written so clearly that she seemed to have been blind until this night. She understood now why her uncle had put her into a convent as soon as her mother died, and he had never come to see her so that she might be forced to take the veil. She could not believe, yet she must believe, for there it was written on the wall, and frightened literally out of her senses she recalled how a few hours ago she was reading in the convent library when the news was brought to her that Madelon was waiting in the parlour. She expected a cake and some fruit, for it was autumn, but Madelon brought neither, but the strange news that her uncle wished her to come to Paris for a week's visit, and when she asked for a reason, Madelon answered: I can see there is no thought in thee for Paris. Now why had Madelon said this? And why had her uncle sent Madelon for her without writing to the nuns? He must have some purpose in view, and Madelon must know of it. And why had Madelon not told her? Was her old nurse, whom she had known always, going to betray her? It looked like it. And she felt like a trapped animal, without power to escape from her uncle and Madelon. And why had Madelon's face changed when she said she was sorry to leave her reading? Some plan was in her mind. Were they about to force her into a marriage that was abhorrent to her? Perhaps! And Héloïse was so frightened that it was only the silence of the house that kept her in bed. She would have run into the street, she thought, but she did not dare face the staircase and the shadows about the doorways, but lay listening and remembering that Madelon had promised to come to her room to see her before she went to bed, to hear what she had thought of her uncle, to talk things over with her. But Madelon hadn't come. Why hadn't she come?

She turned from the right to the left side without ridding herself of the nightmare till at last sleep fell upon her. It fell deeply, and when she opened her eyes Madelon was standing beside her. Did I wake thee? I am sorry, for thou must be tired, having come all the way from Argenteuil. Héloïse tried to answer, but it was some time before she could collect her thoughts sufficiently to recall all the circumstances. Sleep out thy weariness, she heard Madelon say, but she called her back to her bedside. Do not go, I am not sleepy any longer. But I didn't hear thee come into the room but just awoke. The sun coming into the room must have awakened me; the room is quite light and a great part of the morning must have gone by. I came to ask if I might bring thee a glass of wine and a biscuit before I go out marketing, Madelon answered. But may I not go with thee and see the shops and learn the prices? Madelon said she could. And a great help it will be to me to escape the marketing, as I shall do if thou shouldst stay with us and learn the prices. Call to me when thou hast washed thyself and I'll come and help thee with thy dressing, for to do it will be like old times back again.

An hour later they were in and out of the shops like bees among flowers, talking of the price of provisions, which had gone up alarmingly, a fine chicken costing as much as threepence—as much as a sheep in the days gone by in Brittany, Madelon was saying, as they returned home through the thronging streets, excited by the pleasant air full of sunshine and thrills. . . . Now the nuns are walking in their convent garden finding young spiders weaving glittering threads from spray to spray, Héloïse said. And I'll warrant startling the ring-doves out of the winter wheat—terrible ravagers of crops, Madelon replied. Why, there's the Canon, looking up at the peaked gables as usual. So it is, Héloïse replied, and raising her eyes she admired the gables showing aloft against the autumn sky. Shining, she said, like—— Like newly varnished paint, Madelon answered, and began to complain that the Canon never wearied of gaping and gazing up and down the street. See him now, his eyes wandering from balcony to balcony. So you went out without your milk, Madelon said, interrupting the Canon's dreams, and he heard from them

of the high prices that had to be paid for food in the market. I didn't forget my milk, he said; my mouth was parched and I drank some water instead.

They returned home together, and leaving the Canon to his business in the study, Héloïse followed Madelon to the kitchen, saying that she would like to help her to get the dinner ready. But, dearie, thou'rt more thyself with a book in thy hands than washing vegetables with me. Maybe so, Madelon, Héloïse answered, and then a second thought prompted the words: but not always; I like housework and have done some in the convent. Thou'lt find me handy. We'll come to understand each other better before long, Madelon said. Dost think we shall, Madelon? Héloïse asked, and the tone of her voice was cheerful, implying a hope that in time she might come to understand her uncle better, if she did not return to the convent. I don't know why he doesn't give thee the key of his library, Madelon said, breaking the silence. Thou wouldst not harm his books, if I know thee at all, and who should know thee better than myself? Héloïse asked Madelon where the scullery was, an excuse to avoid committing herself to an opinion, and the Breton woman guessing, as an animal guesses, that Héloïse did not wish to say whether she liked her uncle or disliked him and was waiting for ideas about herself—not knowing if her instinct led her to the cloister or to the world—put no questions to her. Poor child, how should she know her road, having come from a convent only yesterday, where all is different, she said to herself, as the peel of the last apple fell into the bowl. The talk turned upon last year's crop of apples, and Héloïse enjoyed her morning's work, and would have preferred to have dined with Madelon in the kitchen, but that could not be. She must face her uncle, of whom she was now afraid. But during dinner he asked her questions that were pleasant to answer. What Latin had she read? We have read all the Fathers. When I say we, uncle, I mean myself and some three or four nuns. I am afraid that there are not many pages in St. Augustine that would not prove a stumbling-block to the greater number of our community. So St. Augustine presents difficulties to the majority of the convent—— the Canon began, and afraid that he was about

to speak contemptuously of the nuns of Argenteuil before Madelon (who was bringing in the apple-dumpling at that moment), Héloïse began to speak in Latin, fetching, she could see, a darkness into Madelon's face, for she liked to share in the conversation as a listener, sometimes contributing to it herself. She did not like being cut off from communication, looking upon herself as part of the family. But any blame cast upon the nuns at Argenteuil would be painful to Héloïse, so she continued in Latin, astonishing her uncle, who, forgetful of the nuns at Argenteuil and their ignorance, broke in suddenly: but thy Latin is excellent, niece; now how was it that we have been speaking jargon till this minute? A question that Héloïse avoided answering, ingeniously saying that she was thinking of Virgil and had dropped into Latin accidentally. We shall speak Latin henceforth together, said the Canon. In Latin I shall have to address you in the second person singular, uncle. The second person is without importance in Latin, and he began to praise the nuns for having taught his niece the language of Virgil and Cicero so thoroughly, saying that he would write to thank them for their learning and assiduity. And thy script must be as good as thy speech, I can tell that without seeing it, he said, and asked her what her reading had been outside of Augustine and Jerome, what poetry she had read. She answered Prudentius. A worthy man, the Canon said. By the word worthy expressing thy contempt, Héloïse answered. But why is he contemptible? And she began to compare him with Augustine, asking if there were not beautiful things in Augustine, recalling to his mind a celebrated passage in which the Saint stands at a window overlooking the Tiber. Well enough, well enough, the Canon replied, for one who lived after the Roman prime, but bearing traces of his indebtedness to Plotinus and his school; for you know that St. Augustine was a convert, if not to Christianity at least to the one only true Church. There are beautiful things in the *Confessions*, no doubt, but—— But what, uncle? And why standest thou looking at me with wondering eyes? I am thinking, the Canon said, that thou'rt fortunate indeed not to have read the divine Virgil, for what wouldn't I give to have my first reading of Virgil before me

instead of behind me. But Virgil is never behind one, there is always new beauty to be discovered in him. But why divine, uncle? It might have been better, Héloïse, if I had said the blessed Virgil, for besides being the great poet of all time, past and present, Virgil knew by the light of his own genius that the Redeemer was about to be born unto us. And he recited the prophetic passage, saying that he did not see how it could be held to be else than God-inspired. Yet to admit a pagan among the prophets is hardly orthodox, he added, his thoughts almost away, and Héloïse did not speak, afraid to disturb her uncle's meditation. When she asked him of what he was thinking he answered that he was thinking of the great store of delight in the cupboards for her, comparing the room to a hive filled with honey, layer upon layer of honeycombs; and going to one of the cupboards, he lifted down his books with absurdly careful hands and placed them before her on the table. Come, sit by me, and I'll show them to thee: here are Virgil, Ovid, Horace, Tibullus, Cicero, Seneca. Never to have read Virgil! O Héloïse, what joy awaits thee! Eclogues! Æneid! Georgics! At which end wilt thou begin? With the story of Dido, doubtless. But if I shall find so much pleasure in this literature, why is it locked away in cupboards? Héloïse asked. And walking up and down the room he told her that he had foreseen in her visit but six evenings of silly chatter. But the convent wrote, uncle, that I was advanced in learning for my age. The talk of nuns, he replied, is of little weight. But since thou'rt speaking Latin with me, and good Latin, my books are thine for the time that thou'rt with me. But be careful of them; do not turn down the leaves; read with clean hands. Now, with which wilt thou begin? With Virgil, the divine Virgil, Héloïse cried, and receiving the volume from him she opened it, and his face lighting up with pleasure, he walked to and fro, saying: how strangely things come about. I thought to listen to a girl's babble every evening and I have come upon one who speaks Latin, a slightly battered Latin, it is true, but still a language that Virgil would have understood. Making wry faces, perchance, as he listened to us, Héloïse answered, raising her head from the book. How beautiful it is; may I go on reading, uncle? Yes, go on read-

ing; I have stayed too long talking to thee. But, uncle, thou'lt instruct me? Translate this for me. The meaning of the passage is, the Canon said: dost think the ashes of thy husband or his buried shade care for thy desolation? But buried shade is a strange expression, said Héloïse. Virgil, the Canon answered, had a more lively sense of man's soul than any other writer of his time; he knew it to be different from the body, of an ethereal substance, if substance be not a wrong word to use in connection with the soul. But to-day I am expected early at the Cathedral; give me the book to put away. To-morrow thou shalt find it ready for thee as soon as thou returnest from market and thy work be done in the house, for I would not have Virgil come between thee and thy work, lest Madelon be annoyed. Héloïse promised him that her thoughts would be on her marketing till midday; I will not come hither till the day's work is finished. My work is finished for to-day, she said, holding out her hand to receive back the precious volume. But I should like to see thee in the Cathedral this afternoon, and Madelon too, who has come to tell me that I must hasten if I would not be late for vespers, would do well to accompany us.

Now, Canon, it is always the same with you, no change, always the same, the sturdy and courageous little Breton replied. After doubts and fears lest you might disturb your niece's vocation you sent for her, but instead of leaving the poor child at home to read, you want to take her to the Cathedral for your own pleasure. If she is only to be here for a few days why not let her enjoy them in her own fashion, according to her whim? Her whim is reading, like your own. Madelon, I will not have thee come, as I have told thee before many times—— Told me what, Canon? Giving advice that is not asked for. But you are always asking my advice, Canon, and though you do not always like it, you often take it. And now let the poor child have her read and go yourself to the Cathedral and let me look after the supper; which I swear will be to your taste this evening. Now what is it going to be? the Canon asked, and they went down talking amiably, leaving Héloïse with the volume in her hand, eager to read in the pleasant company-room, by its window over-

looking the river, the soft airs coming up through the willow-trees, tossing her hair as she sat, won almost at once by the romantic story of the Trojan who fled with his comrades in a galley while Troy was still smoking, to meet with many adventures by sea and land, in deserts and in caves, before arriving in Carthage to love Dido and to abandon her in obedience to the gods, who bade him depart for Italy, their will being the greatest and the world's need being Rome.

And for long hours Héloïse sat reading, and was soothed by Virgil's evident sorrow for Dido, though the gods had bidden the flight of Æneas for their great purposes. Even a goddess pities her, she said, Iris, her wings showing a thousand colours in the sun as she wheels above the smoke of the pyre, preparing to liberate the soul from the body. But to give way like this is silly, she said, and after a brief effort to master her feelings she rose to her feet, and after walking back and forth she said: I must go and speak to somebody. And descending the stairs, she talked with Madelon, telling her the story she had been reading, to which Madelon gave all the attention she could spare from the vegetables. But such casual attention did not satisfy Héloïse's enthusiasm and, disappointed, she returned to the window overlooking the Seine; and unable to take up the book again, she fell to thinking instead of the poet whom Christianity unites with paganism in honouring, trying to conclude that Christianity had prepared the world for a better understanding for Virgil than any he had yet found in the century he lived in, and reasoning gently with herself but never able to convince herself that this was so. For it seemed to her easier to believe that the world was returning whence it came, not to paganism but to a sympathy with our life in this world, which we would do well to lead without repining; and her eyes returning to the page, she reread that Iris, with her wings showing a thousand colours in the sun, descended to liberate the soul from the body. But why liberate the soul from the body? she asked, since the two are inseparable as we know them; and putting this question of liberation aside, she gave thanks to Virgil for his recognition of the soul, more intimate than of any other pagan writer. But why consider the soul or the body? The beauty

of Latin itself is enough, she said, and sat asking herself why Virgil's skies and seas should please her more than St. Augustine's exordiums of faith; and little by little she fell to thinking that though the decrees of the ancient gods seemed hard to Virgil they were less stern in his mind than St. Augustine's conception of his duty to Christ, till forgetful of gods and goddesses, she said: the language he writes is born of his subject. His story is of the world's beauty, of the skies by day and night and of the seas, and of the heroes, who, returning from Troy in their galleys, were driven almost on to the coasts where the Cyclopes would have devoured them had not a man, worn with uttermost hunger and of piteous mien, stretched suppliant hands to them from the shore and told them that he came from the land of Ithaca, a luckless companion of Ulysses, left behind when Ulysses escaped with his band from the ogre's cavern. Nor had he done speaking when the ogre came down from the mountain, followed by his flocks, his only joy, guiding himself to the well-known shore with his staff, a young pine-tree lately lopped, and began to wash his wound. But the splashing of the oars reached his ears and he strode into the sea seeking the galley, and not finding it he let off a mighty roar, rousing the Cyclopes till they rushed to the harbour and thronged the shores.

Héloïse sat thinking, asking herself if it were all true. If in the olden time Cyclopes haunted the Sicilian coasts; if Polyphemus ate human flesh; if Ulysses drove out his single eye with a stake hardened in the fire; asking herself if the story were a fable or if life had changed, becoming smaller and meaner than it was. If there were Cyclopes they must have left their bones behind. But Troy was, Æneas loved Dido and left her to found Rome in obedience to the will of the gods. Whereat she fell to seeking for the first time a meaning in life, asking herself whence it came and whither it went. She had accepted the daily doings of the convent as life and received the life she found in her uncle's house as thoughtlessly. The Canon went to the Cathedral and returned from it every morning, reminding her of her father, who started forth at the same hour to see his patients. But Virgil put the thought into her mind that the hearth and the home

were not the whôle of life, and that another life followed the quiet, uneventful, religious and domestic life, with which she was acquainted, like a shadow, met it at every turn like a reflection. Was not her father a hero like Æneas when he enlisted in Raymond's army? Heroism was not over and done with, but Virgil's story of the fugitives from Troy kindled her imagination, and she could not tell whether the spell was one of language or a sudden sympathy for adventure. And she was so absorbed in her dream that neither the opening of the door nor her uncle's footsteps awakened her.

Héloïse, of what art thou thinking? She uttered a little cry. How thou didst frighten me, uncle! for I was far away in Carthage. Ah, but thou must read from the beginning and not skip, else thou'lt miss the chief beauty, the unfolding of the story, clouds rising out of clouds and melting into clouds. But there are no rules for reading. I begin at the beginning of a book and read line by line, and however tiresome the book may be I should have a scruple in laying it aside when halfway through. Each must love the Mantuan according to his mind, and read him, too, in the same accordance. But why, uncle, do we not write as the pagans wrote? On the subject of the difference between their Latin and the Latin of the Roman poets there was much to say, and they talked till it was time to go down to supper, and they descended the stairs talking in Latin. Héloïse tried to turn the conversation into jargon many times unsuccessfully, for without noticing the change the Canon continued in Latin, thinking intently of what he was eating and drinking and casually of the evening he was going to spend with his niece upstairs reading Latin, talking Latin, helping her, perchance, with some construction foreign to Christian Latin, saying: come read me the passage aloud and thou'lt understand it, and if that method did not prevail and Héloïse still found the passage dark, going over to her and standing behind her chair helping away the difficult constructions, his finger on the text and a word of explanation on his tongue. Besides certain constructions difficult for one unacquainted with the ancient language there were the mythology and the ritual that Virgil has made part of the poetic substance of his poem as much as the story he tells; the story

of Pentheus seeing two suns and a double Thebes would have to be explained to Héloïse, else she would lose a great part of the beauty of the poem, and the dreams too of Dido in which Æneas appears to her with cruel aspect and she is compared to Pentheus or Orestes agitated by the Furies.

To talk of these things was always delightful to the Canon, and to tell her that all the Roman poets knew Greek was an added pleasure, and when they went upstairs he watched her face lighting up and envied the pleasures in store for her, for though Virgil was the greatest of all poets, there were others, and he was fortunate to possess them all. She must remain with him till she had read Virgil, Ovid and Tibullus. His thoughts seemed to melt away, and to bring him back from his dreams, whatever they might be, she asked him if the stars knew the destinies they bring. Most of the ancient poets and philosophers, he answered, thought they were animated beings with minds of moral intelligence, a mistake, no doubt, but—— But what, uncle? With the exception of Virgil, he replied, who may be regarded as a Christian prophet, we must not ask more of paganism than it can give; its gift is beauty. But thou'lt soon have learned all that I can teach thee; in another six months thou'lt have no questions to ask me. There was a little sadness in this, and Héloïse thought it well to say: in six months I shall understand Virgil's Latin, but he is not the only poet, and I have heard you say that Horace's Latin is more difficult than Virgil's. There are Tibullus and Ovid, too, the Canon answered—and he wandered to the table to refill his goblet—and Cicero is more difficult than any. Héloïse's hope was that he might not again drink too much wine, and to distract his thoughts from the flagons she came over with a passage that needed no explanation or comment.

CHAP. IV.

AS she sat in the company-room reading in her favourite seat by the window her thoughts were one day startled from her book by a chittering of agitated birds, and looking up she saw seven or eight swallows striving against the pane and

so strangely that she could not but think that they were seeking her help. The birds did not leave the sill at her approach, but redoubled their pathetic cries, and not till the casement was ajar did they fly away, leaving behind the seventh or eighth, whichever it might be, an ailing bird that yielded himself to her, lifting his wings so that she might search his feathers and see what ailed him, some seven or eight great white lice; and when she had freed him from these pests, he seemed to know that he was cleansed. She placed him upon the sill, and after shrilling his gratitude, his wings took the air, and a moment after she saw him hawking flies up and down the river, according to his wont. Poor little fellow, she said, already forgetful that he was sick, forgetful of me; and then, the swallow passing out of her mind as she had passed out of his, she stood for a long time looking at the landscape before her, wondering at the beauty of the willows, now shedding their long, slender leaves. One after another the leaves faded, discoloured, detached themselves from the stems, fluttered and fell into the stream and were borne away. And turning her eyes from the willows to the fields, she noticed how quiet and reposeful they were, as if weary and glad to dream a little while before the white oxen came forth again to turn them into tilth, preparing them for the sower who would come after the plough. The death of the year, she said, just as Virgil described it a thousand years gone by. A year dies every year and is born again, and that for ever and ever. Her eyes followed the clouds, bringing a little dimness as they passed over the sun that she welcomed, and while admiring the fields she asked herself how it was that she had never perceived how beautiful they were before, though she had been looking at them ever since she returned from Argenteuil, the same fields under different aspects and signs, always beautiful under dark skies or somnolent blue. It was Virgil that opened her eyes and gave her sight to see the world and remembrance of much that she had seen and almost forgotten (she had seen without thinking), and now recalling the great grey valley of the Seine, and the river looping through it, with poplar-trees stark against the sky, she fell to think-

ing that for six years she had lived in Argenteuil without seeing anything but wide spaces of earth and sky.

How beautiful, she said, is the dark cloud now at poise over the next parish, drenching the ploughman there, and in a few minutes it will drench him in the field yonder bending over the stilts as the white oxen fare to the headland slowly step by step, so slowly that it seems they will never reach it. But they have reached it and have stopped, good, patient beasts, she said, for the ploughman to lift the share out of the furrow. Again they come down the field, accomplishing another furrow, and again another, and so on till the hour comes for the ploughman to unyoke and lead them to the byre. The same white oxen that we read of in Virgil are before me now, the same oxen, their sides showing against the tilth; and were I to go down to the river I would find among the willows the swarm of bees about which he wrote, murmuring in and out of a hollow tree.

If it had not been for Virgil I should only have known the story of the world as told in relations of martyrdoms and miracles, and have seen the world only in relics of the saints. But he unsealed my eyes, and by night and day the skies and seas will be beautiful to me, and along the coasts that the galleys drove against in their flight from smoking Troy I shall see wreckage and Dido, the unfortunate Queen whose lover the gods raped from her, Æneas being chosen by them for their condign purpose. The smoke from the pyre trailing over the sea in the wake of the departing galleys appeared to her, and she fell to thinking that greater than the gift of vision was Virgil's revelation of human love, love of woman for man and man for woman; and the story with all its sorrow seemed to her so beautiful that she would have changed places with Dido or with Æneas, for on leaving Dido his heart, too, was wrung, but he obeyed the gods and founded Rome. If it had not been for Virgil, she repeated, all I should have known of love was the fact that Sister Paula had had a baby and put it out to nurse in the village—a mere physical experience that befell her as it might any animal; on returning to Paris I saw for the first time a man tipsy, another physical fact but no more, and the physical side of

our nature was known to me in the convent, but of the spiritual I apprehended nothing, nothing till a heathen poet without the knowledge of true religion, that has since been vouchsafed to us by Christ himself, the Son of the living God, was put into my hands. And her thoughts running on incontinently, she said to herself: the knowledge that this heathen had is new to us and good for us, since he reveals God's world to us, for if God made the world beautiful it was because he wished us to see it beautiful; and if the Christian writers were blind to the beauty of the world it was because they were too busy considering spiritual beliefs, and striving to purge faith from error. But now that the faith is secure——

A cloud passed across the sun and the landscape darkened, but a moment after the sun shone forth and the world seemed more beautiful than ever. By the spell of contrast, she said; may we not say, therefore, that beauty will return to us again, making the world seem more beautiful than it was even in Virgilian days? Beauty, she said, was Virgil's theme always, and he taught us by drawing our attention to what is beautiful, and his art was to make things beautiful in themselves seem still more beautiful by selection and exquisite refinements of language. Nothing of the world's beauty seems to have escaped him, she continued, picking up the book again; he raised all things to a higher level, even the Gods, for the Gods of his day were perhaps not as beautiful as he made them, nor the men and the women, though it would grieve me to find myself thinking that they were less august than he painted them to us. Even the insects he raises out of their lowly instincts and gives them immortality.

And giving heed to these marvels certain have taught that bees have a share in the divine mind, and breathe the airs of Heaven; for that God extends to all lands and spaces of sea and depths of sky; from whom flocks and herds and men and all the tribes of wild beasts fetch at birth the fragile gift of separate life; yea, and to him are afterwards returned, and, being dissolved here are once again born, every one of them; nor is there room for death, but living they take their station amid the stars, and rise into the height of Heaven . . .

So real were her dreams and so thin the reality in which she lived that she did not hear the door or see Madelon, though she was on the threshold. Now what fine tale is my Héloïse dreaming over her book in this lonely room? Madelon asked—a room that I never could abide. I shiver in the morning when I come into it with my duster and I am glad to get out of it back to my kitchen; but it would seem that thou canst not have enough of sitting here with a book on thy knee all through the autumn afternoons, as if they were not sad enough with the leaves going one by one down the river. My word! and talking to thyself, and about what? Maybe, Madelon, thou wouldst like to hazard a guess of where my thoughts were? Back in Argenteuil among the nuns, Madelon answered. And Héloïse replied that Madelon could not have made a worse guess, for her thoughts were among some bees that lived a thousand years ago in the days of the Romans. Wishing the Romans back again, Madelon said, and all for the sake of thy Latin language. But all that we have to say can be said in the language we're speaking (so says I to myself); the French language in France and Latin if they like it over and beyond the mountains. France for ourselves, so says I! But what about them bees that lived a thousand years ago? They were much the same as the bees that have their hive in the hollow willow down yonder, I'll be bound they were; or is it that thou hast been reading the contrary in the books the Canon is always putting into thy hands, and which seem such pleasant reading to thee that the meal-times are forgotten and the dinner kept waiting for the end of a sentence? A funny lot we all are here below, says I, as I bend over my pots and pans in the kitchen, loving and hating each other not for ourselves but for what we think about the Latin language or the Trinity. The wrangles that I have heard in this room about the threeness and the oneness, coming to threats, almost to blows, though the majority of them are clerics, good wine-bibbers and cake-gobblers, but with no palate for either as soon as the name of Roscelin is spoken. They are all after him like ferrets after a rat. Often did I say to the Canon: what is the good of trying to please you all with my cakes, for once the name Roscelin is spoken, or

for the matter of that the name of William de Champeaux will do as well, you eat without knowing what you are eating, it might be just dry bread and the best wine water from the Seine. Stirs and quarrels up and down the room till midnight and afterwards in the street, holding on to each other's cloaks and parting worse friends than ever. We used to have pleasant assemblies here till that Roscelin began with his threeness and his oneness, setting everybody by the ears. I used to enjoy making the cakes and setting out the glasses. Ah, and we had songs, too, that I liked listening to, viols and lutes to follow the singer. Yes, and a man that played the vielle so well! Ah, I should like thee to have heard him. My word! He could make his instrument speak. But all that's over and done for, for to escape the threeness and the oneness everybody remains by his own hearth.

Héloïse listened, amused by Madelon's relation of the misfortunes that fell upon the Canon's assemblies. Once a man gets into solitary habits, Madelon continued, it's hard to get him out of them. Now that I lay my head to thinking on it I wouldn't be sure that thou weren't left in the convent for that the Canon having gotten into lonely habits couldn't break himself. I know he was often minded to send for thee, but all that's past, it matters nothing now, since thou'rt the best friends in the world now, as anybody can see for himself. It needs no telling and I am glad of it, but I have my doubts if thou'lt ever get back to Argenteuil, however much thy heart may ache for the nuns; it will break the Canon's heart should thou wish to go back, though he'll never say nothing, no not he, but he'll miss thee, my word! for ever since thou beganst thy Latin chatter he's like a fish in a net drawn along; and as for those books there isn't another in the world but thyself he would let read them. I know him and am perhaps the only one that does and I take the measure of his love for thee by the books he lends thee; the one in thy hand he wouldn't see in another hand for—well, I can't tell how much would bribe him to let me put it back in the cupboard; he'd be jealous were I to cast my eye over it, I do believe, though he knows that I can't read. But we being on the subject of reading, I may as well tell that thy reading in this room is

wellnigh come to an end, for it is plain to thee, as it must be, that there are only one pair of hands in this house, and it is a big house to keep clean, and I am very particular; the dragging up of wood—but what need to talk of the trouble of dragging up wood when there isn't wood to drag up. By troth and faith, a fire in the kitchen is as much as we dare to be having. I am sorry for that, Madelon, Héloïse answered, for it is pleasant to read by this window. Pleasant enough, said Madelon, when the leaves are on the trees and the river flows warm through flowers and reeds, but a shivering outlook in snow-time and the wolves howling almost at our doors. Thou'lt be better downstairs, believe me, for I know what this room is like in winter.

And Héloïse followed Madelon downstairs to the room in which they had their meals. I don't know what there is in this room to find fault with, Madelon continued. With a fire here and a fire next door, thou'lt be able to read at thine ease, warmer than a great many, for only the nobles who live in great castles amid woods manage to have fires in more rooms than one.

The sun is leaving us, it is true; these are the last days of sunny weather, Héloïse answered, and beguiled by the rays that fell through the round windows, they sat down to talk, according to their wont, of past times, which was easy for them to do, Madelon having had the suckling of Héloïse till her milk dried, having tubbed and dressed her in her infancy, and having been the one to take her to Argenteuil (much against her will she had done this, it will be remembered), and the only one from Paris to see her during the next seven years, running backwards and forwards on her short, quick legs, a basket on her arm in which was always a cake, and in summer and autumn fruits. The joy that these visits awakened could never be forgotten and the thrill that the name used to bring was still quick in her, as she did not fail to notice, carrying her back in spirit to childhood, when her uncle spoke it suddenly as he came up the stairs; and her face lit up at the use of the familiar second person singular of the verb, which she would not, could not forgo. The stiff, stupid You would spoil all, she said. And you, Madelon, how are you? Madelon

laughed, saying, we are accustomed to Thou and Thee, and sitting in the house alone, the autumn sun diffusing a pleasant atmosphere of indolence and warmth through the thick glass, Madelon uttered her thoughts incontinently: I don't see thee, try as I will, in a black habit, a rosary hitched to thy girdle; try as I will, I can't manage it. Canst see me more easily walking about the pleasure grounds of a great castle? Héloïse asked. Troth and faith, I can indeed; and what would prevent me from seeing thee there? I who saw thy mother before thee in the grandest castle in Brittany. And Madelon's rage at the injustice done to the young Comtesse boiled over, and the story of her expulsion and disinheritance was told over again, the story in its last ravellings gathering into Madelon's mind the thought that if the Comte and Comtesse came to Paris they could not do else than seek out their granddaughter. If that should fall out, my stay in the rue des Chantres is ended, Héloïse said. Madelon pondered on this question, getting almost a little drowsy over it. If they don't come, others will, said Madelon at last. But I am not beautiful enough for any of them. Thou'rt well enough, Madelon answered, and the straying talk of women idling the afternoon away was soon back again whence it started, whether Héloïse was going to a castle or a cloister. The Canon may live yet for many years, but a man of sixty is not sure of his life. None of us are sure of our lives, Héloïse answered, and the words started a memory in Madelon of a young man, a student, who used to come to the Canon's assemblies and died without any warning illness. Héloïse would have liked to have heard more of this young man, who played the vielle and sang, but Madelon could do no more than follow her own thoughts: the young man is dead and little use it will be for us to waste time over him. We have been very quiet of late, but if thou'rt to remain here the whole winter the Canon will have to do something for thee, and anxious enough he is to please thee; and thou must look to thy words, for thy learning is his brag, like the egg is the hen's; he do cackle over thee at the Cathedral, so it is said, and will be having an assembly for thee soon enough. The latter end of October is our usual time.

And early next week, on a Monday or a Tuesday, Madelon

bounced in on Héloïse, who was reading in the Canon's study in his absence, crying: now what did I tell thee? Before he left the house this morning he was asking me what day would be most convenient for him to invite some friends in for music. Now which day did I think? All days are the same, says I: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday. Then Wednesday, says he, going out. And on Tuesday afternoon Héloïse and Madelon were busy making cakes and considering the wine that should be decanted for the feast.

Despite the great loss of firewood there would have to be a fire upstairs, so Madelon said, the weather having turned suddenly colder; and for the appearance and the cheerfulness too, she added. He'll have all his own friends, patriarchs, of course, but he'll add some students for thy sake, for thou'lt like to talk to somebody of thine own age, which is but reasonable. Héloïse had never talked to a young man yet, but it seemed to her that an understanding of Virgil was far more important than age. So you all think when you come from the convent first; but Lord! thou'lt soon be looking round to see if they be looking after thee. And now I warn thee, talk of thy Virgil and thine Ovid, but let not the names of Roscelin and Champeaux or Anselm or Abélard pass thy lips, for no sooner are these names mentioned than the place is like a rick of straw with somebody dropping lighted tinder about, for a word more or less will do it, and in a minute the fire will be jumping hither and thither, crackling, flaming, leaping; and if it doesn't blaze, smoking in sullen ill-humour, setting everybody coughing. That's the way it is with us, she cried, and Héloïse laughed at Madelon's farmyard imagery, and gave ear to her warning, hearing from her that Virgil and Ovid would come in handy, as good as a shower of rain to put the fire out. Now mind me, the moment thou hearest any one of those names spoken, begin to ask him that speaks it about the bees that I heard thee talking about to thyself the other day, and in a few minutes all danger will be over.

Héloïse bethought herself of some other notable passages besides the bees: a description of a storm that drives the galley on to the shore and Æneas and the crew wading through water filled with sand and encamping in a cavern. Æneas

going forth in search of food meets a herd of deer and shoots seven. Such a story, Madelon thought, might turn the thoughts of their guests from Abélard and Champeaux. And let thy thoughts be on the cakes and wine and the songs they are going to sing, reminding them that for eating and drinking and singing they've come, and not at all for disputation. Héloïse promised, and her tongue was never off the wine and cakes, as she pressed them upon the guests, and so insistent was she that the dreaded names seemed to have been forgotten by everybody. Nor was the next assembly in the rue des Chantres less agreeable. It went by like its predecessor, leaving behind a fading memory of cakes and wine, delightful songs and lute-playing, and talks of the Latin poets to which everybody contributed a few words, some too many. But the evening came when the talk was laboured, when he and she spoke to their neighbour without having anything to say that interested themselves or their neighbours, and the guests rose to sing in the depressing feeling that themselves were not moved to sing much more than the audience to listen. The same guests, the same cakes, wine, music and talk, but how different, said Héloïse, and the Canon replied to her: it is always thus; one week we are up and the next week down, and the evening passes tediously. Let us hope that we shall be more lucky next week. Let us hope so, indeed, Héloïse answered, for I have no heart for a repetition of the last evening just gone by. How it stuck, how it clung! I thought we should never come to the end of it. Our poor guests, how dolefully they departed. Of that I'm not sure, the Canon answered; they enjoyed the wine and cakes. But no, uncle, the wine and cakes were the same but the enjoyment was meagre. One evening we're up, another we are down, the Canon repeated. We must hope for better luck next week, and let the wine and cakes be distributed more plentifully. Héloïse thought that she had pressed the flagons on everybody, but the next week she was still more insistent in her invitations, and her guests, catching her light-heartedness, began to drink, eat, talk, laugh and twang their lutes impatiently. This will be one of our best evenings, Héloïse said as she dashed into the kitchen, saying: more cakes and fruit are wanted. Wine

we have enough for the present. She stayed to chatter with Madelon, and though she was but a few minutes away she was aware, as she came up the stairs, that something doleful had happened in her absence, for she heard neither laughter nor the sounds of lutes, but single voices, and very soon began to apprehend the cause. The words that caught on her ear were: all energy at last becomes identical with the ultimate substance, God, Socrates becoming God in little, and Judas himself identical with both.

It was plain to all that the Nominalist was not fighting fairly by thrusting theology into Dialectics, but since he had chosen to do so he must take the consequences, and everybody knew that the consequences were that the Realist would do likewise. Ah, you are quick, pupil and disciple of Pierre du Pallet—who is Pierre du Pallet? Héloïse asked; Abélard, the Canon whispered—you are quick to turn what I offered as an analogy into an argument of heresy against my person. I will meet you on the same ground and with the same weapon. Will you tell us if this concept, this image in the mind of man, of God, of matter, for I know not where to seek it, be a reality? I hold it as, in a manner, real. I want a categorical answer. I must qualify—— I will have no qualifications, a substance is or is not. Well, then, my concept is a sign. A sign of what? A sound, a word, a symbol, an echo of my ignorance. Nothing then! So truth and virtue and humanity do not exist at all. You suppose yourself to exist, but you have no means of knowing God; therefore to you God does not exist except as an echo of your ignorance! And what concerns you most, the Church does not exist except as your concept of certain individuals whom you cannot regard as a unity, and who suppose themselves to believe in a Trinity which exists only as a sound or symbol. I will not repeat your words, pupil, disciple, whichever you are pleased to call yourself, of Le sieur Pierre du Pallet, outside of this house, for the consequences to you would be deadly; but it is only too clear that you are a materialist, and as such your fate must be settled by a Church Council, unless you prefer the stake by judgment of a secular court.

The spiritual exaltation in the eyes of the rival philoso-

phers that had lighted the way of the disputation was replaced suddenly by a fierce animal hatred, and they would have sprung at each other's throats if the attention of each had not been distracted from the other by a great turbulence that had just risen up in the street. The students have broken out again, the Canon cried, and every cheek paled and all ears were given to the riot. It grew fainter; and the philosophers, becoming certain that it was no more than a street broil, prepared to spring at each other, and would have done so if Héloïse had not thrown herself between them. Would you shame our house and be carried home, philosophers that you are, on stretchers like riotous students? She cut a fine figure standing between them, and although still frightened lest the riot should return, the guests broke into laughter, the philosophers included, and the danger within doors was averted. But without the din seemed to be returning from the river, wherein not a few young men have met their death, the Canon said, and then the riot seemed to subside, and the Canon continued: no more than a quarrel proceeding from wineshop to wineshop. Let us hope so, several voices muttered, and began to ask each other how they might manage to protect themselves on their way home, and if it would not be wise to return in company. The plight of those who had to cross the Little Bridge was the hardest, and several times it was asked if the crowd was scattering, and the guests, who had descended from Madelon's balcony to the ground floor, ran up to the balcony again and came back with the news that the night was falling fast. We cannot stay here all night, somebody said. The Canon protested, and somebody answered: if we are not to remain here we had better seek our cloaks, and while engaged on the donning of them stories were told of the murders and robberies that had been done by students during the great outbreak of a month ago, when a battle, begun at the corner of the rue Berneuse and the rue Fosse-aux-Chiens in a wineshop, a student having attempted in it the rape of the taverner's daughter, nobody being left in the house at the moment but the girl, was fought all over the town. It was at the moment when the student had torn open her bodice that the taverner entered, and in the fight that followed up and down the stairs

the student received the thrust of a knife: and it not being a mortal wound he staggered to the doorway calling for help, whereupon many students forced their way into the house despite bars and bolts, but not before the taverner escaped to the roof, from whence he called for help. Come all ye traders to my help, he cried; and glad they were of the occasion to wreak vengeance on the students.

The critical moment had come, one side or the other had to win a victory, and the traders, determined that the victory should be on their side, came out armed with hatchets and knives and great earthenware jars, every weapon they could lay hands on, and all night long the war was waged through the rue Coupe-Gueule, rue du Gros-Pet, rue de la Grande Truanderie, rue du Pet, rue Mederal, rue du Cul-de-Pet, rue Pute-y-Muce, rue Coup-de-Baton, rue Prise-Miche, rue de Trou-Punais, rue Tire-Pet, rue du Petit-Pet, and through the narrow laneways, stews and entanglements of these streets. It is said that three hundred students were killed during the course of the night, and their bodies thrown into the river, for they had to be got rid of. The traders too must have lost many, so fierce was the fighting, the Canon said, and after speaking of the great number of wounded students, many hundreds, the Canon's guests sallied forth in the hope that they would reach home in safety, it not being likely that after so severe a defeat the students would attempt to attack the hapless passenger, an assumption that proved true for that evening at least. Canon Fulbert's guests reached Notre-Dame without meeting with any disagreeable adventure, nothing more than the spectacle of a duel in progress, an excellent swordsman who had come out without his sword defending himself with a cane against a street bully.

And philosophers, lute-players and prelates watched him striving to reach his opponent's eyes and mouth, where the cane could wound. Now he will be killed for certain, said Alberic, and he and Romuald were about to intervene when with a simple *dégagement* a dangerous thrust was parried and the cane passing over the assailant's guard entered his open mouth, putting an end to the combat. A fine swordsman, said Alberic, who would have put you all to flight had he been

armed. Whereupon the friends of the wounded man cried: so thou wouldst argue the point with us? But seeing that Alberic and Romuald had friends behind them they desisted, and Alberic and Romuald returned to their friends, who rated them for their foolhardiness, asking why they should come between friends who had chosen to quarrel. Why, indeed, said Romuald, since swordsmanship proceeds out of friendship, like the egg from the hen; we can't have one without the other. Whereupon somebody said that it would be well to hasten, for delay might cause them to fall in with some prowling students who might claim their friendship. So they marched on, all in agreement that Paris was at that moment much too friendly, and that it was unwise for those living on either bank of the river to remain on the city island after dusk. And before reaching the Little Bridge it was remembered that the evenings would be shorter next week, that they were nearing the end of the still autumn weather without doubt, though it seemed hard to believe that in a few days loud winds would be whirling round corners of streets and the dry streets under their feet would be turned once more into a very liquid mud. An aureoled moon, somebody said, is a certain sign of a change in the weather.

CHAP. V.

I HOPE our guests will arrive home safely, and she stood looking up and down the street, still full of students. A hazy moon is a sure sign of rain, said the Canon; we shall have rain to-morrow or the next day, and high winds, and no further venturing out to assemblies for singing and lute-playing or theological discussion. If it hadn't been for thy courage ill blows would have been exchanged and our philosophers carried home on stretchers, in thy words, like students after a broil in a wineshop. No more assemblies this year? Héloïse said. Ah! so thou'rt craving after more lute-playing and singing, and maybe the lute-players, too, have a place in thy thoughts. I was thinking, uncle, of the philosophers rather than the lute-players. For before coming to fisticuffs they argued well, and I don't know now whether Nomi-

nalism or Realism would have had the upper hand if charges of heresy hadn't been made. So, niece, thy clever brain was able to follow the argument, a subtle one; well-matched the sides were and equal the weapons; and it is a pity that heresy cannot be barred and reason given fair play, the last word, of course, being with the Church. At that moment the Canon turned into the house, and sitting face to face the twain talked before bedtime, Héloïse putting questions and learning from her uncle that Roscelin, Canon of Compiègne, was the first exponent of the doctrine of Nominalism, carrying it even to its extreme, not hesitating to say that the three persons of the Trinity were made from different substances, thereby falling into the heresy of Tritheism, the doctrine that there are three Gods.

The Canon would have liked to expatiate in the arguments put forward by Roscelin and his opponent William de Champeaux, but Héloïse, who had heard Plato and Aristotle spoken of, was eager to know how they came into the controversy, and she asked which was the Nominalist and which the Realist. The Canon shuffled, for his knowledge of Plato was not enough to make this plain to her. I have the *Timæus,* he said, and thou'lt find Socrates in it; but as he has no care for the science of nature he passes over the task of exposition to the Pythagorean philosopher. Of Socrates I have heard, Héloïse replied, but know very little about him, no more than that he was a great Dialectician. He was that, Fulbert answered, but not after the manner of the two Dialecticians who were about to break each other's heads half-an-hour ago in the room above us. All we have of Plato in Latin is the *Timæus,* and it is pretty hard reading, I can tell thee; very unsuited for a girl's brain, but being given to learning as a girl never was before, take it. He put the book into her hands, which she opened at once. No, no, not now; leave it on thy desk and to-morrow morning thou canst take thy fill of it. But thou hast not given me Aristotle, uncle, and I would compare him with Plato.

A strange girl, indeed, he said, and going to his cupboard he took out the *Categories* and handed them to her, saying: now to bed; Madelon is in hers, and we should follow her

example. To-morrow will be long enough to satisfy thy curiosity. At these words, uttered superciliously, Héloïse sulked a little, not liking her desire of learning to be sneered at; all the same she had no heart for books at the moment, being tired, and went to her bed wondering how much Nominalism and Realism she would find in the Greeks. A wonderful people, she said, and fell asleep full of projects for the study of the Greek language. The arts and learning began and were completed by the Greeks. A wonderful people, she said to herself during the night; for since their day the world has done little else than to remember and forget. And in the morning while lying awake thinking of the two books that awaited her, her almost dream words returned to her. With which shall I begin? she asked herself. A suspicion that Plato was the Realist decided her choice, and the day was spent in the pleasure of a new book without it becoming apparent to her how Plato had come to concern himself with the questions that now agitated all men. She pursued her inquiry steadily, though disappointed to find little of the Dialectic, the new science, or the old science that Plato had invented, or was it Socrates—who was more or less Plato's invention—in the *Timæus*. Instead of what she was looking for she found an account of the world's soul, which was not God but one of God's creatures, and the story that from out the world's soul came the spirits that guide the planets. And then, she said, turning the page, we seem to come down to human souls. But what is this? God plunges the soul into the flux of matter, which has a perturbing influence; and the souls have to recover their original nature, and when they have done this they return to the stars, whence they came. But Plato could not have meant all this literally, she said, and resolving not to be turned aside from the book (which was, of course, one of the world's books) by certain surface difficulties, she plunged into the physics of the *Timæus* and read on, page after page, all that day and the next day and many days after, now and again laying the book aside to pick up the *Categories* of Aristotle and indulge herself in another bewilderment. But though he was easier to understand than Plato he did not please her so much, and she laid the *Categories* aside, saying:

if Plato can be attractive in physics, how much more attractive must he be in the other books? Why haven't we got the *Banquet?* Ah! I must learn Greek; and she fell to thinking how long it would take her to learn to read Greek as easily as Latin. Two or three years, she said, and took up the *Categories* again, saying to herself: there's no use thinking about learning Greek; if I cannot understand these books in Latin how much less shall I understand them in Greek?

After diligent reading her curiosity was partly satisfied. There is, she said, one day, certainly a hint in Aristotle of the doctrine of the Nominalists. Here we have it: there are no primary substances but individuals.

She became so absorbed in the writings of these two great men that she hardly noticed the Canon in the evenings. Even when she laid her book aside, her thoughts were far away; and she did not seem to feel the cold, though the winter was now upon them, great violence of wind raging round the pointed towers and the peaked gables, storms of wind and rain, bleak, cold rain that only just escaped being snow. The Canon often asked himself of what she could be thinking as she sat looking into the smouldering log, the last one that they dared to throw into the grate that evening. He guessed her to be lost in Plato, so impassive was her face. No, she replied to his question: art thinking of Plato or Aristotle? no; I was not thinking of either. I was thinking, she said, of the wonderful Greek language, which, alas! we do not trouble to learn. Her casual sententiousness annoyed the Canon, but he restrained himself, saying to himself: let her think of the wonderful Greek language, and begin it when she pleases. But how is all this to end? And forgetful of her, he fell to considering the mistake he had made, for he was now certain that he had not done well when he yielded to his conscience (or to some nervous scruple that he had mistaken for his conscience) and sent Madelon to Argenteuil with instructions that she was to bring Héloïse back with her. On a more senseless errand a woman was never sent, so it seemed to him in his present petulance, for if Héloïse were seriously minded to take the veil, it were folly to bring her to Paris; and if she were not seriously minded to take the veil, how could he

have been beguiled into believing that she would return to Argenteuil at the end of a week's visit?

To be just, she had never asked to extend her visit. It was to please him that she consented to spend the autumn with him—his purpose being that she should read Virgil, and after Virgil Ovid, and after Ovid Tibullus. But now she was reading Plato and Aristotle, and with the same interest as she had read the poets. He did not know, and as likely as not she did not know herself, whether she preferred poetry to philosophy or philosophy to poetry; she was earnest and studious but without direction in her studies, and mere acquisition of knowledge for knowledge's sake is vanity. But this new craze would not last; the next one might be astronomy or—— He hoped it would not be astrology, for the Church looks with no kindly eye on that science. . . . If he had been true to his instinct and left her in the convent, only going to see her when she took the white veil, perhaps not then—not till she took her final vows—her life would have been settled advantageously, for with her intelligence and gift for study she could not fail to reach the position of abbess in some great community: Benedictines, Cistercians or Carmelites, it mattered not which. But the abbess he foresaw, himself had killed. She would not return to the nuns. Her ambition would find satisfaction in the books that he had locked up so that she should not see them (for his instinct was right from the beginning); but alas! he had put Virgil's Æneid into her hands, and humoured by her eagerness and admiration of the hexameters he had said that she must not return yet awhile to Argenteuil, not before she had read all the Latin poets. Himself was the source and origin of all this vexation, and his thoughts taking a sudden turn, he remembered that she had never spoken of religion and had no care for stories of miracles, listening with unmoved face and catching at the first chance to speak of something else, wearing usually a smile on her lips when the talk was about relics; she had even laughed a little when one of his colleagues spoke of the Virgin's milk, a flask of which was now being brought to Europe, saying that she did not see how the milk could have been preserved through the centuries. The preservation was

part of the miracle, and though it might be argued that miracles were becoming perhaps a little common, Héloïse's scorn of the story (if scorn was too strong a word, lack of reverence was not) showed him that his mistake in sending Madelon to fetch her from Argenteuil was not such a mistake as it seemed at first sight. For the further knowledge that he had acquired of her during this visit led him to doubt if there were the makings of a nun in her; she would have returned to him sooner or later, and if that were so, it was well she had not delayed longer in the convent, for she was a well-figured girl, pleasant to look upon: her shapely head framed in brown shining hair, her grey, idealistic eyes and her alert voice were enough to win for her some great baron or count. Her intelligence and learning had already made her known to everybody in Paris, and would make her known to everybody who came to Paris at Easter. But here again Héloïse seemed to fail him, for men did not attract her; and he remembered that she spoke to one man as she did to the next one, to Alberic as she did to Romuald, and from Romuald he had seen her turn to one of his friends, a man as old as himself, with the same smile on her face, the same look in her eyes.

A strange, perplexing girl, he said; one who takes as much pleasure in talking to the oldest canon as she does in talking to the youngest man. Everybody likes her, everybody praises her, but nobody takes her into the corners of the room to talk apart with her, nor does she encourage anybody to follow her into corners for private little talks; her coldness chills; and looking still more deeply into her character he concluded that her vice was a certain aloofness, if aloofness may be called a vice. Well, there are plenty of the other sort about, so it may be well that there should be one like her. And thus did the Canon think of his niece whilst he and she shivered together by the insufficient fire, and so did he often think as he left the house to go to the Cathedral; and if he met a colleague on his way thither the first words that were addressed to him were a question: how is Héloïse? Is she reading Aristotle or is she reading Plato, or has she gone back to Virgil? Everybody admires Héloïse, everybody likes her,

everybody talks about her, and I am proud of her, he said. But when I am no longer by her, when she is alone in the world—— And he fell to thinking of his years. And then, his thoughts returning to Philippe, he said: I should not like to meet him on the thither side and not be able to tell him that she was well married or an abbess—if not already an abbess, at least on her way to being one.

So whether going to the Cathedral or from the Cathedral, he was always thinking of Héloïse, making plans for her, saying to himself: it does not follow, because she did not like the few students I was able to invite to my house, that she might not love a great noble, a count, a baron; men and women usually love those within their own circle. Héloïse is a Coetlogon on her mother's side, and her grandparents may one day relent; if they do, Héloïse may accept their patronage. Or she might be influenced by the story—the story that I told her, fool that I was. But we are guided by our instincts rather than by what we hear, and of her instincts I know nothing, but Madelon, who has known Héloïse since she was a little child, will be able to give me a rough and ready but a true reading of her character and temperament.

The opportunity to take Madelon into his confidence came a few days later, on the doorstep.

He blurted out a good many of his perplexities before giving her time to close the door against the storm, and the servant replied: she must have been very much on your mind indeed, for you to begin telling the story in the middle of the driving snow. A man of your age too! Yes, it's very cold, he answered, and they went up to the company-room, for if they talked in the parlour Héloïse, who was in the study, would come out to meet them. But in the company-room, the Canon said, she will not mind us; she is too busy with her book. And walking up and down, back and forth, to keep himself warm, he related all his misgivings; he had done wrong in sending Madelon to Argenteuil to fetch Héloïse. She would have become a nun for certain if she hadn't been brought to Paris. But no sooner was this opinion of Héloïse out of his mouth than he sought to qualify it, saying that as far as he could see she showed no religious inclinations, attending Mass

on Sundays, of course, but wellnigh unwilling. And he continued to tell all his thoughts about her and about himself, till Madelon was past her patience. But what can I do? she asked. I can do nothing. A great deal, Madelon, he answered; if thou wilt but listen. But I have been listening, she replied, and the Canon, overcoming his rising irritation against his servant, begged her to tell him her reading of Héloïse's character. For I can make nothing of it, he said. Is she indifferent to men as she is to the Church? Will she marry, and if she won't what will befall her? I am thinking of my death, Madelon; and thou hast known her since she was a little child. Tell me. My brother Philippe put her in my charge. But I'm no wise woman, Canon, nor reader of the stars. Madelon, I will not be spoken to—— Checking himself again, he said: Madelon, thou hast an insight into her character, though nobody else has. And you would like to hear the truth from me? she answered. Well, it's easily told, for what is she but a child, seventeen—hardly that?—yet you expect her to know her own mind. Thinkest I am impatient, Madelon? Well, well! Impatient you were born and impatient you'll die. Impatient! Should we find a more impatient man if we were to travel the world over? I doubt it. Impatient for your dinner and impatient if anybody talks to you. Impatient in your stall in the Cathedral. Impatient—— Let us not waste time talking about the Cathedral. So thy hope is that when Héloïse has grown into womanhood she'll marry? You want to know how I understand her? said Madelon. Well, she is just one of those women who may go through life without knowing how a man is made or giving it a thought, if she doesn't find somebody who comes with the right candle. Ah, should she meet the right candle there'll be a blaze in the hemp stalks, I'll warrant. So that is how thou seest her, and maybe thou'rt right, the Canon muttered, half to himself. And having got that much out of me, Madelon answered, no more than anybody could see who had half-an-eye to see with, we'll go downstairs, I to my kitchen and you to your study, where you will find her reading.

As they came down the stairs Madelon spoke of a wolf-hunt, saying that the hunters were waiting for the full moon

to beguile the pack into the city. Madelon says there's going to be a wolf-hunt, the Canon said, throwing open the study door. From whom didst get the news? Héloïse asked. From whom indeed? Madelon replied. Why, all the town is talking of it; nor are there two in the town except your two selves who don't know of it. And as uncle and niece begged of her to remove their ignorance, she began to tell that the wolves had been in the streets lately after nightfall, picking up what they could get in the way of stray cats and dogs, and emboldened by hunger, for the snow was falling fast, they would soon come into the streets as they did in Brittany, for had she not seen a child eaten by an old grey wolf in her own village street? And lest the same disaster should fall out in Paris, as well it might if the wolves were not to be persecuted, the townsfolk were about to begin to rid themselves of the large pack that came down from the Orléans forest every night, a matter of fifty miles. But what is fifty miles, she said, to a wolf? Just no more than a little trot round to ourselves across the island from bridge to bridge. The squealing of a pig tied to a post by the Little Bridge will soon be heard, and the wolf that hears it will let off a howl to his comrades, a dozen or twenty, for no one knows the size of the pack, and these will soon be growling and fighting over piggy. Another will be tied within the island some yards behind the bridge, and he too will be eaten; and three nights from now, being full moon and the night almost as clear as day, a dozen wolves or more will be seeking for food beyond the bridge, and when they are well within the city the bridges will be held by spearmen. So let us pray for a fine night, for clear moonlight means the death of the pack. It will be a clever wolf who will escape with his life. So said Madelon, and it was as if God had answered their prayers, for on the night of the full moon a blue stream of light shone right across the island, and a dozen wolves were hunted through it, shapely grey animals with bushy tails, pretty triangular ears and long jaws filled with strangely devised teeth, harmonising in their variety; exquisite instruments of torture that would delight our executioner. Again and again the wolves escaped the spearmen in the street, but all the doors were closed against them and

large dogs tracked them and drove them out of their hiding-places, and they were done to death in couples and singly, with spears and great beams of wood sharpened and hardened by fire, not dying, however, without a fight. But the wolf that stayed to bite was hued down or pierced with a sword, till at last the remnant began to see that only by swimming the stream could they escape. Some five or six plunged in and swam valiantly, but archers were placed along the left and the right banks behind the poplar and the willow trees, and when a wolf reached the middle of the stream an arrow struck him; he went under, the current swilled him away, and from their high balcony Héloïse, the Canon and Madelon watched the shooting from the right bank, seeing one grey, courageous animal reach the bank despite the mortal arrow. He is the last one, Héloïse said, but at these words a beautiful young wolf galloped down their street and, catching sight of Héloïse on the balcony, he laid himself down against the door, and howled for it to be opened to him; and she might have risked being bitten, but before there was time to ask for the Canon's consent some hunters appeared in the street and the young wolf was slain in a corner, a big beam being driven through him.

There's no better covering than a wolf-skin to wrap round the knees, said one of the hunters. But I cannot sit reading with the skin of the animal about my knees that howled to me for help, Héloïse said. We thought, said the hunter, that the skin came to you by right, he that wore it being killed at your door; and as Héloïse would not buy the wolf, he was slung over the beam and carried away for other knees.

CHAP. VI.

THE news of the hunt in the streets and markets next morning was that eleven wolves had been killed. The twelfth had escaped, and this was looked upon as part of the general good fortune, for he, so it was said, would tell his comrades of the danger of venturing into men's cities, especially those built on islands. It was hoped that the snow, which had begun to

come down again, would not fetch further wolves out of their forests; it was hoped, too, that it would not be long upon the ground; a week was spoken of as likely, they being now in February. But almost while the folk were talking of the coming of spring, the blue sky darkened to a dun grey overhead; copper and sulphur it was along the horizon, betokening more snow. The wind rose and shrieked all night about the pointed towers and the peaked gables; and in the morning snow was falling thickly, large flakes more wonderful than any leaf or flower or shell, for nothing compares with the large, white friable snow that passes into a drop of water almost as soon as it falls into the hand that catches it. But in eleven hundred and seventeen it lay on the frozen ground, deepening every hour, day after day filling the roadway and the roofs, whitening the tops of the towers, bearing down the branches of the trees; a wonderful sight truly is a city seen through the white flutter, falling relentlessly, falling always, as if the sky sought to bury the world. Will the flakes never cease from falling? was the thought in everybody's mind, and looking out of their narrow windows, the folk saw little else but snow. It will snow all night, they said; and if it snows all to-morrow and the next night we shall not be able to open our doors. But at last the snow ceased to fall, and shovels were again heard clearing the streets, piling the snow up on either side of the roadway, the ditches rising to seven, eight, and even ten feet high.

It was often on the tongue that if a thaw came quickly water would ooze and trickle down the walls of the houses through the ceilings, bringing them down and littering the floors; and God began to seem ungrateful, to all, for the armies that had been sent to Palestine to rescue the Sepulchre from the Infidel were in everybody's mind. Even the prelacy could not put their doubts aside, and so weary were all of the cold that it came to be said that the Seine might rise and drown them without anybody caring; better drowning than freezing; and the fear, too, was prevalent that great packs of wolves were assembling in the Orléans forest, and would come one night across the ice and devour the half-starved, who were without power to fight them. Be this as it may, from near

and far the wolves howled their hunger over frozen fields, and under all their blankets the shivering folk bethought themselves of the animals lolloping through the streets, quarrelling over the watchmen and then waiting for the doors to be opened, or giving occasional chase to houseless cats and dogs, and when these lacked following the ducks and geese that had come up from the sea, and grabbing starveling birds hardly able to fly. Very often a fox, sneaking along the river-side in the hope of picking up a rat or two, was picked up himself by the wolves and eaten, despite cousinship. Hawks and hooded crows were about, glad to get a bit of entrail or skin left behind by the wolves, and as for the birds, Héloïse said, they seem all to have come out of the woods and fields hoping to find warmth and food in the city, for though there is not much of either in Paris, still Paris must be warmer than the country, and we always have a few crumbs for them. Do they tell each other? she asked herself, as she overlooked the feathered company gathered about on Madelon's balcony, green and gold finches, sparrows, robins, blackbirds and thrushes, bullfinches and even wrens, and as she fed them she caught sight of all the country beyond the river. Never did the drama of life and death cease, taking unexpected turns. A great grey bird came down the sky one day, the silver lining of his wings showing as he wheeled, a heron in search of an open pool, she said; and it was not long before she saw the bird strike at something, but what the capture might be the wriggle along the bank did not express. Was it newt or frog? she asked, or a rat perchance? And after swallowing whatever might have been his breakfast, the bird disappeared into the sedges, raising from time to time a watchful, ecclesiastical head. He has found a pool where the current is likely to break up the ice to-morrow or the day after, she said; he would not have settled himself in the sedges, chosen that corner, if he did not sense a thaw. Ah, a fox is lurking, and will get the heron and the rat together. But the watchful bird rose, escaping capture, leaving behind a hungry fox who watched the grey wings aloft, carrying the bird, it seemed, no faster than himself could run. If I had made my rush a little sooner I might have got him, the fox is saying to himself, Héloïse

said, as she entered the house, with the intention of seeking more bread in the kitchen; for there is no end to my beggars, she added. On her way thither she met Madelon returning from the market with a long tale to tell that no food had come into Paris that morning, carts having been delayed on their way by the snow, which had become like ice. The horses slipped and slithered, she said, unable to get their loads along, and the city farriers were gone to reshoe the horses, but the frosting will soon wear down. And then the farriers will have to reshoe the horses, Héloïse replied; a remark that Madelon seemed to resent, for she retired growling.

Nobody stirred out of doors who could remain within, but walls are poor shelter from great masses of snow piled along the streets, grimy heaps that might be dust-heaps but for patches of white here and there; snow soon loses its beauty in the city. The sky darkened again and the yellow rim over the horizon told of more snow. As soon as it ceased to fall men were at work raising the ditches higher. It began to be felt that none could redeem the city but God. To win him over, Masses were announced, and for these the Canon had to struggle up the street, he and Héloïse supporting each other, and, losing their shoes from time to time in the snow, they spoke, whilst they sought them, of the cities of the North, whose fate it was to lie three or four months of the year under snow.

But the North has sledges, the Canon said, and great stoves in the houses; we are unprepared against the snow and must pray for a thaw. The noise of stamping feet almost silenced the celebrant, and the preacher could only beg the folk to put their trust in God, and to his exhortations the folk answered inly: what have we done to deserve this plague? We are not Egyptians who keep the Lord's people in captivity. Have we not sent the flower of France to Palestine? Of what good to be good if a winter like this is our one reward? God is laughing at us. Such was the talk in the rue des Chantres as the folk went back and forth from the Cathedral through the thin wintry day, a small passage of daylight between the long nights.

It is in our legs that we suffer, Fulbert said; one can keep the body warm but not the legs. And Héloïse thought of the wolf-skin she had refused as they sat watching the spluttering log, not daring to ask Madelon for another, knowing well she would say: if you ask for any more logs it will be the worse for you; you'll be without dinner in three weeks, for there is no telling that the snow won't be with us till then.

The last time they asked for a log she told them that she had seen snow lying on the ground in Brittany for months at a time, and that whilst the snow lasted no logs could come up from the forest. Only in our beds are we warm, Héloïse said, speaking at the end of a long silence; but we cannot remain in bed all day and all night. She had a little pan that she kept within her muff, for her finger-tips burned so bitterly that she could not fix her attention on her book. The Canon had long ago ceased to read, and sat stamping his feet on the cold hearth in which there were but some glimmering ashes, careless whether Héloïse was reading Plato or Aristotle, or had returned from philosophy to poetry; nor had he any longer thought of her future, whether she should return to the cloister or marry one of the great nobles that came up from the provinces for the Easter ceremonies at the Cathedral. And giving utterance one day to the hope that if she did marry she would live in a well-wooded country, she asked him if he would like to see her a comtesse or an abbess, and they talked for a while on the married and the celibate life, without much interest in these questions, a burning log having become more important.

It may be that a change is come; let us go and see, said the Canon. The stars were shining, alas! and they went to their beds disconsolate, thinking of a completely frozen river, for if this last calamity were to fall out then indeed they might say their prayers and prepare for paradise. Or hell, Héloïse said, and the Canon had no heart to reprove her for her levity.

But the frost they detected in the air did not last. The wind changed, clouds began to gather, and once more they were living in a moist atmosphere, but the cold was not less than before, for the streets were full of snow. Dirty, ignominious, earth-disgraced snow, the Canon said, and leaving

the rest of his thoughts to be inferred from the context, that the fallen snow and the fallen soul were comparable, he started to wade through mud and water to the Cathedral, stopping on his threshold to remind Héloïse that news had not come from Palestine for many weeks. Have the Crusaders been defeated? he asked. Is the Sepulchre again in the hands of the Saracens?

The rain poured and the wind howled. Now and then the sky blackened a little, giving token of another downpour, and an icy flood carried by a whirling wind swept about the streets. We are back in the original marsh, the people said; the earth is without green and the sky without blue. Not a streak of blue for many months. A late spring, said another, and his words were understood as ironical. God indeed seemed angry with his people, for at the beginning of March snow began to fall again and an old willow, the one, Héloïse said, in which the bees had made their nests, crashed into the storm and was carried away by the swirling water. Madelon, who thought more of honey than of the bees, said: we have lost many pounds of honey. Not many, Héloïse answered; for the bees perhaped died this winter for lack of honey; we may have taken too much from them. Of that I know naught, Madelon said; they are gone and the tree with them. But Madelon, said Héloïse, are we going to get any spring this year? It doesn't look much like it at present, Madelon answered, the snow still on the ground and we in March. And Héloïse, who had not seen many springs, fell to thinking that the prophecy that the world would end in the year one thousand was about to be fulfilled. The prophets had miscalculated the date of the end by a hundred years, that was all. The beginning of the end is at hand, she said; and next morning she awoke to find that she was mistaken, the sky was blue, the air warm, and before evening the passengers were walking in the middle of the street to avoid the drip, talking about the rising river and saying that boats would soon be plying about the Cathedral. But the river sank despite the melting snows, and every morning an almost summer sun was busy drying up the streets, turning the marshes into fields again, the genial warmth and gaiety of

the sky permitting Héloïse to sit in the company-room without a fire, a rug about her knees, reading in the window, hearing (in her mind's ear, of course) the great minstrel Orpheus singing as the galley pranced over the curling waves, through the Hellespont, passing island after island, the Chorus telling new stories of adventure, enchantment and prophecy, that new worlds shall be discovered in the age to come, that the imprisoning ocean shall be thrown open till there shall be no land alone, no ultima Thule. After many months of absence from the play, she returned to it to learn that Jason, having lived with Medea for two years, wearied of her enough to marry Creusa, the daughter of Creon, King of Corinth. The poet's reason for including the murder of the children in the story eluded Héloïse, making her so unhappy that the thrill of happiness was extraordinarily keen when she perceived in a sudden inspiration that the murder of the children was the act of the barbarian girl and not of the sorceress. For Medea's nature was a double one: two souls in one body, each striving for mastery. A true woman and a type of humanity, for every human being contains two different souls, neither of which ever succeeds in overcoming the other. But was she aware, Héloïse asked herself, that there were a barbarian girl and a great sorceress within her? And casting a glance inward she asked herself for the first time—she had never put the question to herself before, certainly not so plainly—if she had a destiny, glad or sad, no matter which, but a destiny—and waited for an answer that did not come. Her life, as she apprehended it, looking back, seemed strangely trivial and inconsequential. I seem to have been walking in my sleep till now, almost unaware of what might betide, but now I feel like rousing. And she began to examine and weigh words that she had let go by without consideration. The dead, she said, have a hold upon us that the living haven't; my father rules from his grave in Palestine. And in one intense moment of vision she saw into life as it is offered to women, the obliteration of themselves in marriage or the obliteration of themselves in convent rules, and understood that she must marry or return to Argenteuil.

Her uncle had sent for her under compulsion, urged by her father's ghost, and she had come to Paris to spend a week, not longer; but her uncle had detained her so that she might read Virgil. She had read Virgil and many other poets, but reading Latin was not enough. A time comes when a woman must choose, and the choice is stinted, convent or marriage, it's always that for a woman. But the pain of choosing is great, she said; the power of choice not being within us; and the happy woman is she who doesn't choose but allows time to choose for her. But time is laggard. A few years will decide better than I and far better than they which is my natural bourne, the cloister or the castle. Why press me to choose? But nobody is pressing me; and she began to ask herself what might be the cause of her disquiet. Like Medea, she said, two destinies are struggling for mastery; and feeling that she could not sit thinking of herself any longer she began to ask herself if a walk in the woods and the gathering of violets, which would be sure to be springing up almost everywhere, would reveal to her some truth about herself, or if she would gain knowledge of herself by going to the Cathedral and addressing a prayer to the Virgin. And being unable to choose between violets and prayer, she left fate to decide this not very important question. The river drew her that day as it did every day; and overlooking it she watched the ducks swimming in it, saying to herself: Virgil does not speak of the beauty of ducks swimming in a river, the softness of their voices and their round, black eyes so intelligent, but I should not have known how beautiful they are when swimming in a river if I had not read Virgil, and might well have lived my life out from birth to death without knowing that ducks swam with their pert tails turned up to the sky. It is strange that he should have no words about waterlilies, yet he taught me to see their great leathery leaves. He loved the earth, for man lives by the earth as well as on the earth; and her thoughts returning to the fields that repaid the peasant for his labour, she figured him returning in the dusk.

When the scales make daylight and sleep equal in hours,

she said, and just halve the glow between light and shadow, set four bulls at work, O man; sow the barley fields right into the showery skirts of frost-bound winter. No less it is time to cover in the earth the flax plant and the corn poppy and to urge on the belated ploughs while the dry soil allows it.

But one cannot read verses such as these and forget the violet-scented vale, and the priest, accompanied by a sleek Tuscan boy blowing an ivory flute, leading a goat to an altar under God's own sky, she said; but it was in the autumn always that thanksgiving was made for the fruits of the fields, for it was then that the orchards and vineyards gave up their fruits. It is true, she continued, that the spring shower is as needful as the sun and there should have been thanksgiving for it, and unable to recall any she wondered whether, if she fared far enough, she would come upon some bluebell wood where the ancient rites were practised.

CHAP. VII.

ON reaching the Great Bridge she stopped like one upon whom a spell was laid, and she could not do else than abandon the ramble in the woods, for it came to her memory that the King's Gardens were open to the public on Thursday, and that students assembled there for discussion. Soon the swallows will be here, she said, building under the eaves, and she repeated Virgil's lines all the way up the rue des Chantres, passing the Cathedral without seeing it, her feet leading her instinctively to the Little Bridge that connected the city island with the left bank. Clerks and students were coming over it. For what are you coming hither? she asked, and heard the news that Abélard's enemies thought that they had found at last a champion whom they could trust to withstand Abélard. But the one they have found, the scholar said, is but a barking dog that should be driven off with the stick of truth. All the same I'd like to hear his story, said Héloïse, and the student began:

Abélard's opponent is Gosvin, a young man from Joslen's

school at Douai, and one full of pluck and resource in argument, whom Joslen, his master, tried all he could to dissuade from his resolve to go to Paris and challenge Abélard in disputation, telling him that Abélard was even more formidable in criticism than in discussion, not so much a doctor as a wit; that he never gave in, never acquiesced in the truth unless it was in his favour; that he wielded the hammer of Hercules, and never let go, and that he, Gosvin, would do better to unravel his sophisms and avoid his errors than to expose himself to laughter. But as he could not be dissuaded his friends and comrades accompanied their David, cheering him most of the way hither; and now all Douai is praying for him, so it is said. Abélard knows nothing of it. Gosvin has a few friends, and as soon as the master begins his lessons Gosvin is to rise up. You'll hear it all in an hour's time in the cloister. From another she learnt that Gosvin was a stripling of six and twenty, slight as a child, with pink and white complexion. And Abélard? she asked. As the student was about to answer her, he was accosted by another student, and Héloïse gave ear to him, thinking he was about to speak of Abélard. But it was of the fine weather they spoke, and not many words were exchanged on this subject when the rumour anent the cloudless sky provoked the sally: a sky that you do not often see here, but which we see so often in Italy that we weary of it. How proud the Italians are of their sky, cried another. Is not then the sun the same everywhere? Héloïse asked, and it was this simple question that raised the discussion which she had heard her uncle say, the evening the philosophers almost came to blows, was one of daily hap in the Cathedral Gardens. The same sun? a student asked. Have a care. Did not the master tell us that qualities are real and that the species are as real? Of course, cried another student, things are not words, and whoever denies it falls into Roscelin's heresy.

A contentious statement this was, one that soon called forth a challenger who said: if the qualities exist beyond the things with which we associate them, the colour of the flowers exists apart from the flowers; and if the Italian sky is of one colour and the French sky of another, there are two skies. If one sky

is cool and grey and the other blue and burning, it seems hard to deny that there are several qualities of sun—two suns. But we know that there is but one sun, cried several voices, and the students agreed that the question was one that should be put to the master. But another student held that the question was too simple to trouble the master with, and in answer to many he said: there is an excellent white wine in thy country, Alberic, and there is an excellent red wine on thy hill-sides at Beaune. But what is wine? A species, and liquids are the genus. Now the species is a real thing. It is the vininess that makes the thing, the wine, just as humanity makes the man. But white wine and red wine both are species of the same genus, liquid, and they both are the same in the possession of vininess; therefore, red wine and white wine are the same. But we can go farther. The genus is also a real thing. The genus liquid exists in water, just as it does in wine, and the genus is the truth. It is the essence, and therefore wine is the same as water. I hope you all understand that wine and water are interchangeable. I suppose it is all right, and I'll try to swallow this conclusion, though I choke. Another example: Pacquette is blonde; Madelon is dark. Both are of the species—girl. They have it . . . the essence . . . that . . . how shall I say it . . . *puella virgo* . . . I give it up. For who shall say that they possess that which——

Of a sudden the voices ceased, and, turning her head, Héloïse saw a short man, of square build, who, although well advanced in the thirties, still conveyed an impression of youthfulness; for though squarely built his figure was well knit, his eyes were bright, and his skin fresh and not of an unpleasing hue, brown and ruddy. The day being warm, he walked carrying his hat in his hand, looking round him pleased at the attendance, and it was this look of self-satisfaction that stirred a feeling of dislike in Héloïse. He seemed to her complacent and vain; and she did not like his round head, his black hair, his slightly prominent eyes: solemn eyes, she said to herself, and I like merry eyes; the only feature that forced an acknowledgment from her was his forehead, which was large and finely turned. But her admiration of it passed away quickly in her dislike of his blunt, fleshy nose. His name had often

been mentioned in her presence, she was even familiar with it, and had she thought about him at all she would have imagined a thin, finely cut profile, sensitive nose and pointed chin. She could not imagine Aristotle or Plato—Plato still less than Aristotle—or Seneca, or Virgil, or Ovid, or Tibullus (but these last were poets), converging to the type that Abélard represented so prominently. She had seen his broad, almost clerical, face before, dimly, it is true, but she had seen it in certain prelates, and the thought rose up in her mind that that philosophy wore an altogether different appearance. But as soon as he spoke her feelings about him changed as the world changes when the cloud passes and the sun comes out. The voice had much to do with the transformation, but not all; it gave beauty to his very slightest utterance; and the phrases that caught upon her ear were well worded. He speaks good Latin, she said to herself, and the words had hardly passed through her mind when another thought whispered to her: were Plato and Aristotle dandies? Half-an-hour must have been spent in the donning of the laces at his cuffs and another in choosing the buckles of his shoes. But her criticism of his apparel was quickly swept away again by the sound of the smooth, rich, baritone voice, and this time she perceived that the voice was accompanied by an exquisite courtesy, and that the manner in which he walked addressing those who gathered about him to admire and to listen was kindly, although it was plain that though familiarity from him would be an honour he would resent it quickly in another.

The students gave way before him; he smiled upon all, waved his square hand, stopping before one who, on the approach of the master, strove to obliterate a circle that he had drawn on the gravel with his stick. On seeing the circle and divining the use of it, Abélard stepped forward from his admirers and held a little court before proceeding into the cloister to hold his greater court. A circle, he said, is a figure in which all the lines drawn from the centre to the circumference are equal; and of the lines there may be any number. But some of you would say that I can add another hundred lines and another two hundred lines, but a moment comes when no more lines can be added, and this puts into

the arguer's mouth the question: does the circle exist? Hence all the difficulties that we know of have arisen, for the circle does not exist in substance. But it exists in the mind, and the mind is something, therefore the circle exists. On these words, amid many acclamations Abélard resumed his resolute gait, exchanging words with those whom he knew, smiling encouragingly, inviting all to follow him to the cloister.

Héloïse fell into the crowd of pupils and disciples that followed him to the cloister—herself the newest—and from thence into a sort of classroom, a vaulted hall with many benches in front of the pulpit and one long bench fixed to the oak-panelled wall. The pupils took their places on the distant benches, the disciples on the benches grouped about the pulpit; Héloïse sought an obscure corner, and her eyes followed Abélard as he went up the five steps that led to the pulpit, and saw him spread his notes on the desk in front of him. But no sooner had he done this than a stir, almost a quarrel, began in the hall, certain pushing their way in and others opposing them. And among these intruders she caught sight of Gosvin, recognising him by the description she had had of him from the students in the Gardens. Now what is the meaning of all this? Abélard asked, and he was answered by Gosvin. I have come from Douai to Paris to thine own school, the little man answered, to get an answer from thee at the request of the students. It would be better for thee to learn to hold thy tongue and not interrupt my lesson, Abélard replied. But I have come all the way to challenge thee to discussion. From whose school? Abélard asked. From the school of Anselm of Laon, Gosvin replied. Hold hard, cried one of the disciples, rising suddenly to his feet. Who is this ill-conditioned fellow who comes from Douai thouing and theeing the master? Who indeed is he? cried several voices, and in a moment a dozen were ready to fling the little impertinent without the doors, and would have done it if Abélard had not interposed. My lesson ended, I will call on the youngest among us to answer you. Douai shall thou and thee Paris, while Paris employs the more formal you. At these words Abélard's disciples and pupils released Gosvin. It may be that the youngest is able to answer my arguments as well as

the master, but Douai has sent me to meet Abélard in disputation. The disciples rose from their desks, some five or six, and whispered that Gosvin was of good repute in disputation, and urged Abélard to hear him lest a bad impression might be created and their enemies return to Douai with stories. Speak, Abélard said, turning to Gosvin, and Gosvin, unabashed, began:

I am here to overcome, to put to flight, those who hold the false doctrine that there are no substances but individuals. Wilt hear me? he asked. And Abélard answered: have I not said that I will hear you, but be brief, for the question is of little interest here, it having been unriddled and judged long ago; but speak, my boy; only one condition do I make, that you will leave the hall as soon as you have gotten your answer. Now speak.

I will put my argument simply and into the space of a few lines, saying that if there are only individuals then there are Peter, Paul, John and so on, but no humanity. Horses, too, have names, so have dogs, albeit there is no equinity or caninity; and the relation between any man and any horse and any dog is the same as between any man and man and horse and horse and dog and dog. But this being thy doctrine, we in Douai would hear how comes it that we speak of the community of mankind.

The question that you have put to me is even simpler than I had expected, Abélard answered, and it almost shames me to answer it, but since I have promised an answer, hear it. Humanity, equinity and caninity, we say, do not exist as things separable from men, horses and dogs, but we do not deny that men resemble one another, that horses resemble one another and dogs resemble one another. The names of the species indicate the resemblance, which is greater than the resemblance of all to one another as animals, and there you have the reality of species and genus indicated by the names men, horses, dogs, animals.

No sooner had Abélard ceased speaking than Gosvin began again, but before he had uttered many words Abélard, with stern face, answered: thou hast my answer, interrupt my lesson no longer, else I shall have to ask my pupils to remove

thee among some cinders on a shovel. On these words the hustling began, and the little man was pushed to and fro, almost carried out of the hall, crying back all the while: but I haven't yet ended, I haven't ended, while heedless of the outcry, Abélard applied himself to his notes just as if the scene had already faded from his mind, ready to begin his lecture as soon as the disciples returned.

The two poles of man's moral existence, he said, are faith and reason. But it is not our object to-day to inquire which is the more important. We wish rather to affirm and to show that both are equal and that the work begun by faith can be continued by reason; that, in fact, reason was given to us to continue it. Faith and reason are the theme of to-day's lecture, and the relations which each bears to the other; but before proceeding into discrimination I would call your thoughts to the consideration that faith and reason projected themselves into literature, taking a final form in the same century, as far as can be known about the sixth century before Our Lord Jesus Christ was born in Bethlehem. It was fifteen hundred years before this great event, the greatest that ever happened in the history of the world, that the Bible began to come into literary existence—in other parlance, nearly a thousand years before the Babylonian captivity in Palestine the story of man's birth and fall was communicated by God to his Chosen People, a stiff-necked, rebellious people, as himself has called them, accepting the revelation without enough apprehension of the honour that was done to them, disobeying the law that was given unto them for their preservation at all times, until God in his anger resolved to destroy the world, but was moved to spare the world and to accept the atonement proposed by his Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ.

The second communication of God's will was received by the Apostles, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, from Jesus Christ himself.

I must ask pardon for calling to your thoughts truths so well known to you all, but it seems to me that for a plenary understanding of to-day's lecture it was necessary to remind you that the Bible, unlike Homer, is entirely dissociated from

man's imagination; the Old and the New Testaments are both messages from God to Man. In saying this I am on sure ground, none will dispute it; none except the Infidel from whom our armies have succeeded in rescuing the Holy Sepulchre. None will dispute except the Infidel that the Bible, being inspired by God, must be accepted by man through God's own gift, faith. We accept the Bible without discussion. It is our duty, of course, to interpret the Bible; it is the duty of the Church, for God has given us the Church, as well as the Bible. I need not labour the point any further, and will pass on to a matter less trite and commonplace than that the Bible is a work of Divine inspiration, to a matter that has not yet been considered, brought into relief, by anybody that I know of: that while the Bible was coming into existence, at the same time a great poet, the greatest the world has ever known, was brooding and writing the Iliad and the Odyssey. And these poems, though they came less directly from God than the Bible, are also a gift from God in something more than the trite phrase implies: all things come from God. Inspiration has never been denied to the Iliad and the Odyssey. Homer was inspired; he received his gift from God, and though the inspiration was less direct than the inspiration that was vouchsafed to Moses, still it must be held that he was inspired. I do not know if the point has ever been disputed. Virgil, too, was inspired, and perhaps his inspiration was even more direct than Homer's, for did he not predict the coming of Our Lord? It is a remarkable fact—remarkable—I choose this word with care—remarkable that the great work of faith and the great work of reason should have been written in the same period, for Homer lived perhaps a thousand years before the birth of Our Lord, about the time of David or Solomon, who continued the Bible.

A student raised his hand. May I put a question, master? And the master, with a slight contraction of the brow, resigned himself to the question, and it was debated for some minutes whether Homer's poems should not be considered as arising out of a new sense come to man, the sense of beauty. Are not the poems concerned with beauty rather than with reason? The interrupter seemed to have brought a truth to

light, but the master explained that the sense of beauty implied reason, for beauty means to discriminate, and to discriminate we must have reason; the animals that have not reason do not discriminate, but are guided by their instincts. The interrupter acquiesced, unwillingly, it seemed to Héloïse, and she hated him, for her whole being was drawn to the idea that Abélard was about to make known, drawn as the needle is to the lodestone, wholly without thought, all other thoughts and desires being absorbed in one desire, the desire of the story on the lips of the Prophet; for he was that in her eyes already. This much, however, I will concede to Raymond, Abélard continued, looking towards the student, who blushed with pleasure at feeling the master's eyes upon him, and as the word concede implied that in the master's opinion his interruption was not wholly valueless he became at once a centre of admiration. This much I will concede, Abélard said, to Raymond, that Homer's poems were not the dawn of reason; the dawn of reason arose some hundreds of years later in the East. Homer's poems were but a beacon fire, or shall we call them the cry of the watchman: the dawn is nigh! for it was four hundred years later, Abélard repeated, emphasising the point, which he seemed to regard as of primary importance, that man leaped, as it were, into a new existence, about six hundred years before the coming of Christ, that man broke at least one of the links that attached him to the animal, and rose to higher state than before: Buddha appeared in India, Confucius in China, a little later Plato and Aristotle in Greece. All these were inspired, and all these prepared the world to receive the great revelation that was to come to the Apostles from Jesus Christ himself in Palestine eleven hundred and seventeen years ago.

The throne is in heaven and invisible, but the stairway leading to the throne is under our feet; we can look back and count the stairs, each one of which is a step in the ascension of man. Each generation mounts a stair, and when a generation mounts several there is a halt for man to draw breath and prepare himself for the next ascension. Eleven hundred and seventeen years ago man reached a great stair-head, Christianity; and ever since we have been calling to the laggard

nations to follow us. They have not followed as quickly as we would wish, and to bring them up to where we now stand a new revelation was needed. It has been vouchsafed to us. One hundred and seventeen years ago it was thought that the old world was ended; and men gave their wealth to the Church, certain that the last day was at hand. Nor was their mistake as great as it has been since supposed. If the foretelling had been: the old world by faith alone is ended, the prophets would have foretold no more than the truth, for it has come to pass within the last century that a new revelation has been given to us, and by it all the world may be won to Christianity.

As Abélard spoke these words Héloïse remembered the words of the Chorus in Seneca's *Medea*: new worlds shall be discovered in the age to come, the imprisoning ocean shall be thrown open till there shall be no land alone, no ultima Thule. And she longed to rise to her feet and speak them, for they would bring wings to the master's argument, a flying feather, at least. So did she feel as she sat entranced, questioning herself; carried, in truth, out of an old world into a new one. In her trance, for it was one, she accepted the intellectual and the physical as one, though a few moments before she distinguished between them. Nor was this strange, for the man was not the same; all the defects of parade and artificiality had disappeared, and the faith he was preaching, that reason had come to man's aid and was about to remould the world, shone out of his pale blue exalted eyes—all she saw of him clearly were his eyes and she heard only his smooth, rich voice; and his arguments mattered little or nothing to her now. So deep was the spell put upon her that if he had told her to mount the tower of the Cathedral and cast herself over she would have done it.

He had passed into the second phase of his lecture, into analysis and discernment, and the disciples were putting questions; she heard him answer every one with ease and was carried out of herself beyond control; drawn along in sensations of fear and happiness, she knew not which, nor what would befall her, till Abélard began to gather his notes from his desk, and while doing so he continued to address his favourite pupils and disciples. She strove to resist the impulse urg-

ing her, but her strength broke and snapped like a viol string, and pressing through the crowd, lost to reason, she threw herself on her knees, and catching his hands as he came down from the pulpit, she kissed them. Women did not come to his lectures, and his pupils regarded the interruption as unseemly—if not unseemly at least an uncomely incident,—and pressed forward, thinking that the master must not be subjected to violent demonstrations twice on the same afternoon. But Abélard turned them back, and raising Héloïse from her knees he led her out of the cloister into the quadrangle. His arm was about her, his voice whispered in her ear.

What happened afterwards she never succeeded in remembering exactly, but supposed that she must have followed the familiar streets instinctively without knowing she was following them. It could not have been else, for when she awoke finally she stood on the steps of her uncle's house ashamed, not knowing how it had all come about.

CHAP. VIII.

IT is her step, Fulbert said, as he sat reading, and laying down his book, he waited. But hearing her talking in the front hall with Madelon, he grew impatient. Come, he cried, and tell me thy roamings in the woods. What, no violets! I have not been in the woods to-day, uncle. And she told how at the Great Bridge she was moved to go to the Cathedral to say a prayer to the Virgin for her guidance. An excellent thought! the Canon exclaimed, and was about to add that he wished such thoughts were more frequent in her, but he checked himself in time; and it was well that he did, for Héloïse had to confess that her pious project was swept out of her mind by the groups of students in the King's Gardens. Waiting for Abélard, the Canon interposed, with some, to be sure, waiting for Gosvin and looking forward to his triumph in disputation, a young man of genius whom Douai sends to Paris in the hope that his dialectic may be enough to stop the spread of Nominalism. To bid the tide retire, Héloïse said, with a quiet smile. So thou regardest Abélard's genius as a tide that cannot be

stayed. Gosvin's bidding will not stay the tide of Abélard's success, she replied. Instead of seeking violets in the woods thou wast in the cloister, niece, augmenting by one the swelling crowd of Abélard's admirers. Yes, I was in the cloister, uncle. And I gather from thy words and tone that he triumphed over Gosvin. Héloïse raised her eyes contemptuously and asked the Canon in a quiet, even voice, irritating him thereby, if Abélard were greater than Plato and Aristotle, to which the Canon replied that none was and none ever would be greater than Plato and Aristotle; but being of tractable humour that morning and disposed to worship the rising sun, he said that Abélard's genius was an honour to France, and that if he could steer clear of heresy he would rank sooner or later as the descendant of Plato and Aristotle. He comes from thy country, niece, Nantes or near by. An argumentative fellow truly, the son of Bérenger, a soldier attached to the court of Hoel IV., Duke of Brittany, who, it appears, gave up all claim to the family estate so that he might be free to wander the world over, ravelling and unravelling thoughts and entangling opponents in webs of arguments. Many are the stories told about him, and they agree in this, that he has never yet been worsted in an intellectual encounter. But how is this, niece? I never knew thee give a thought to a living man before. How is it that he has captured thine imagination? Did you think it difficult to capture it, uncle? Yours as well as mine would have been captured too had you been in the cloister to-day. And knowing you as I do, I wonder with what words you would have praised him. I was detained in the Cathedral, the Canon answered, through the fault—— But there's no need why I should trouble thee with the story; far better that I should hear how Abélard overthrew Gosvin in disputation. It was soon over, Héloïse answered, and after keeping the Canon waiting a long time, she spoke aloud, but to herself mainly: nobody was ever more wonderful. So he demolished Gosvin at once? the Canon interjected. Gosvin! she cried. Yet he is a man of good repute in argument, else he would not have been chosen as champion, the Canon said, and now fully awake, Héloïse began to tell that his aggression was as stupid as it was impertinent. By what right did he

interrupt the master's lesson? she asked. All the same, he was treated none too fairly, being only given an opportunity of saying a few words. Abélard replied briefly, and deeming the argument at an end, muttered, as he turned to his notes, that if Gosvin did not leave at once he would send for a shovel and cinders. The Canon laughed outright; such ferocities of language, he said, were characteristic of Abélard. But the provocation put upon Abélard, she averred, was very great, and I am not in agreement with you, uncle, that ferocities are characteristic of him, for I heard him speak with courtesy to his disciples in the Gardens and controvert with gentleness, stopping to explain by means of a circle his doctrine of Conceptualism. But the Canon gave little heed to her eulogy, remarking casually that Abélard was a master of honeyed words as well as bitter. Enough, however, of Abélard for the present; tell me his lesson. I am not Abélard and cannot relate his lesson. I do not ask thee to relate the lecture but to tell the subject of it. The subject was Faith and Reason, she answered. One that he would treat well, the Canon said, and he begged his niece to relate as much of the lesson as she could remember. But he could not persuade her out of her thoughts, and when he pressed her she replied: I would tell it if I could, but cannot. At last she broke the pause: but do you tell me his story. And if I do? he asked. If you do I will try to remember his lesson, she replied.

At the time of which I am about to speak I was not Canon of Notre-Dame, but I remember hearing that William de Champeaux was never tired of saying that he had never had a pupil like Abélard, and his praise ran on the lines that Abélard could develop an argument in several directions, drawing from it unsuspected thoughts and ideas. But the lad had no intention of repeating and reshaping his master's thoughts, and Champeaux, it is said, had to yield to him in argument more than once, which made an enemy of his master and many of his master's disciples. But enemies mattered little to him, for he could learn anything he pleased in half the time that anybody else could, and his daring was so great that men gave way before him as men will do before victory, accepting him for the sake of his success, bowing before him as before a

conqueror. At that time he was a mere stripling, and anxious that his friends' hopes of him should come to pass, he began to look round him for a school in which he should be master. And Melun, an important town near Fontainebleau, seeming to him suitable, he settled there. At once his school became famous, and it was at Melun that his talent began to take wing; England, Germany, Italy, sent students, and encouraged by the good fortune which he now believed was his for ever, Abélard left Melun for Corbeil. The choice was a lucky one, maybe a wise one. However this may be, Corbeil became soon after, like Melun, a royal seat, and at Corbeil he was nearer Paris, ready at any moment to carry the citadel by assault. Which he did, Héloïse interjected. Yes; but no sooner had he succeeded in establishing a school at Corbeil than his health yielded to the strain he had put upon it and he was obliged to give up everything and to go away for a long rest. He travelled, it is said, in Germany and England; some hold that it was in England that he met Roscelin, but it is not known for certain, for he never speaks of these years, and the secrecy he keeps regarding them has set many tongues wagging. A wonderful man, uncle. But go on with your story, for it is as wonderful as—— Go on with your story, uncle. Well, niece, he reappeared after some four or five years. But if thou wouldst understand his reappearance I must tell what befell William de Champeaux in the meanwhile. Leave Champeaux out of it, uncle; tell me about Abélard. The story of one cannot be told without the other, the Canon answered testily. I must tell the story in my own way. Champeaux, fallen into years, was living in as much seclusion as a man of great reputation may; but he was persuaded to open a school again at St. Victor, and one day, while lecturing to his pupils and disciples, he caught sight of Abélard among them. His heart misgave him, and it is said that he found difficulty in continuing his lesson till Abélard came forward to reassure him, saying: I have come to ask permission to attend your lessons, master. Champeaux could not exclude him from his school; to have done so would have been a confession that he was not able to meet him in argument; and it seems to me that the story I am telling of his irruption into Champeaux's school brings into

view the spiritual adventurer who left his home in Brittany to meet men in disputation and overthrow them, the pitiless logician who cares for nothing but his art. But his turn will come, as it comes to all who are carried away by pride and believe their destinies are written in the signs of the zodiac.

At first he was full of deference, but it was only a mock, for Champeaux's doctrine was the very opposite to Roscelin's, and Abélard began to press him back with arguments clear and striking, worsting him in his own school and obliging him to retire from the position he had taken up.

After this second victory, Abélard's position seemed more than ever secure; his doctrine acquired greater force and influence, and many of those who attacked him before passed over to his side, won by his personality and eloquence. He conquered where nobody else dared; his enemies were afraid to meet him; he was so skilful in argument that he could attack both sides equally well; Realist and Nominalist went down before him, and he came to be spoken of as the new Socrates. But this was unendurable, and William de Champeaux assembled all his partisans and friends, all the congregation of St. Victor, and challenged him to a decisive argument, one that must bring ruin to one or the other. Abélard was victorious? Héloïse asked. Yes; but in the middle of his triumph, or perhaps I should say at the moment when his triumph was complete, another idea seems to have come into his head and he left public life without telling anybody he was going. This second withdrawal was well calculated, a matter of some three or four months, a period long enough for the people to feel how much his presence and teaching meant to them. In three or four months he was back again, before the wonderment ceased. He entered Paris as a conquerer, triumph after triumph drawing crowds from all countries; Germany, England, Italy, came to listen to Abélard, the renowned philosopher of Europe.

The Canon stopped speaking so that Héloïse might ask him some questions that would lead to a further unwinding of a story which had begun to seem to him more inveigling than he knew it to be before he began it. But Héloïse said nothing, and after waiting for a question from her, he said: where are

thy thoughts? My thoughts, uncle, were—— I do not know exactly where they were. I suppose I must have been thinking. Can one think without words? Ah, now I remember; I was asking myself if Abélard's story would have revealed to me the man whom I saw and heard in the cloister—— If thou hadst heard his story from me before seeing him? Yes, uncle; and her face still deep in a cloud of meditation, she confessed that it was not until she heard him in the cloister that she began to see that what she saw and heard were not two different things but one thing, for he would not be himself without—— Without what, niece? the Canon asked, for he was amused by Héloïse's embarrassment, and to continue it he added: his beauty? The sneer threw Héloïse off her guard, and she answered that nobody could call Abélard an ugly man. A stocky little fellow, the Canon persisted. And he would have said more of the same kind if Héloïse's face had not warned him not to proceed further with his teasing. He spoke instead of Abélard's forehead, which he admitted to be of the Socratic type in its amplitude; but he averred that the likeness between the two men ceased at the forehead, for whereas Socrates was of the ascetic temperament, Abélard was by his face notably a free liver, a disparagement that seemed to Héloïse like a challenge. She asked the Canon to mention a feature that would testify to the truth of this, and the spirit of battle being upon him he could not keep back the words: his singing of French songs. You never spoke to me before of Abélard as one divided between free living and philosophy. Nor is it many minutes since you were speaking of him as the intellectual descendant of Aristotle and Plato; your present sneers of him cannot be else than an attempt to anger me, and we would do better, mayhap, to talk of matters on which we are agreed. The Canon did not answer her, but sat perplexed, anxious at least to tell her that this unseemly quarrel was accidental. He began to explain that in speaking of Abélard as stocky he had been led away by his love of banter. Héloïse's face stopped him in the middle of a sentence, and instead of finishing it he went to his cupboard and returned with two books; he handed her Virgil and began to read Tibullus, and this act was so graceful and conciliatory

that Héloïse could barely restrain a smile when their eyes met.

The storm was over, but a storm leaves disorder behind it, and her uncle's disparagement of Abélard made it impossible for her to continue sitting opposite to him, though she knew that his sneers and sarcasms were intended to provoke her or to put her enthusiasm for the lecture (which he judged to be excessive) to a test. He was forgiven, but his presence was an irritation, and she sat thinking how she might leave the room without rousing her uncle's suspicions that she was angry; and to save him from all misapprehension she continued to read the *Eclogues* a while longer, till at last, unable to bear the strain, she rose to her feet abruptly and bade him good-night, saying that she felt tired and was going to bed. A very long and dragging hour it has been, but it is over at last, she said, on her way to her room, and as she could think better lying than sitting, she undressed, turned over in her bed, folded her arms, and began to ask herself why she had omitted to tell her uncle what had befallen her in the Cathedral. The words were often on her lips, but they were checked and passed over, which was unfortunate, for it was nearly certain he would hear the story from somebody present, Alberic or Romuald; and besides these there were others who were on friendly terms with him and came to the house in the rue des Chantres. As soon as he heard of her behaviour he would come to her and say: what is this story that I hear about thee, bursting through the disciples at the end of the lecture and throwing thyself at his feet? What answer would she make? At last it became clear to her that she must confide the whole matter to her uncle when he came downstairs next morning. But she was down before him, and after waiting some while, she and Madelon started forth for the market, their baskets on their arms, thinking that the Canon would be up to meet them when they returned. But though they were an hour away, the Canon was still abed when they returned, having drunk more wine than was good for him after we bade each other good-night, Héloïse said to Madelon, who answered that on these occasions the Canon was unfit for the transaction of any business. He will sign any papers that are put before

him, and it is my duty to deny him to callers; we shan't see much of him before three o'clock. Her words hit the mark; it was a little after three before the Canon left the house, without Héloïse hearing him leave it, and when an hour later she asked Madelon for news of her uncle, Madelon answered: he has gone to the Cathedral; he left here about an hour ago, and thou must have been deep in thy book not to have heard him, for he banged the door behind him. There is often much noise in the street, Héloïse answered, and she returned to the company-room, thinking to continue her reading till her uncle returned, for her mind was still fixed on confiding her trouble to him. And if she got tired of reading she would go to the woods and come back with the violets that she did not gather yesterday. He will smell them from the doorway, and will be pleased to find them in his study, she said.

And her thoughts passing from violets, she began once more to consider the story she had to tell her uncle. At what point would she begin to tell it? She would have to tell him the whole of it, so she would begin by telling that as she was about to cross the Great Bridge something stopped her from crossing it. He would ask her what she meant by something, and she only knew that she was turned from her first purpose (which was to go in the woods and gather violets) by a thought that she needed the Virgin's intercession. She was on her way to the Cathedral to say a prayer, but was turned from this second purpose by the sight of the students in the King's Gardens, where Alberic and Romuald were indulging in mental gymnastics, laughing alternately at Realism and Nominalism; and it was in the midst of their jocular disputation that Abélard crossed the Gardens, surrounded by pupils and disciples, on his way to the cloister. All this she had told her uncle, and about Gosvin; and of the wonderful lecture on Faith and Reason she had given such an account as she was able. Her story would therefore concentrate on the moment when she was compelled to press through the crowd and throw herself at his feet. Alas, her uncle would think that she was telling him a fable, a dream that she had dreamed overnight and mistook for reality. She would not blame him, for her conduct was so unlike herself that she did not recognise herself

in it, nor would anyone who knew her recognise her in it. The nuns, were they told the story, would deny it, and who knew her better than the nuns? Not even Madelon. Madelon wouldn't believe it any more than the nuns would, nor could she blame them, for she didn't believe it herself—yet it was true. How little one knows of oneself! She fell to wondering if the impulse that had compelled her in the Cathedral would arise again; not the same impulse, but similar impulses. Was she subject to these? And was the one that had risen yesterday but the first of a long series?

Overcome, almost afraid, she sat viewing her future life through her imagination, and so immersed was she in the possibilities that a single thought had evoked, that she did not hear the door open, and was startled almost out of her wits by Madelon's voice: now whatever is the girl thinking about? Did I frighten thee, Héloïse? Well, these frights are soon over, and as soon as thou hast recovered thy wits tell me the story thou hast been reading. It's no story, Madelon; I was only thinking. And it not being Madelon's way to press for an answer, she said: a letter has just come for thee, and I have brought it up. Héloïse thought she detected a faint irony in Madelon's voice. A letter for me? she said; from whom can it be? I can tell nothing about it, Madelon answered; a boy brought it and went away quickly. Brought it and went away quickly, Héloïse repeated. The letter could not have come from other than Abélard, and the thought brought a change of expression into her face, which was unfortunate, for Madelon's eyes were upon her. Did the boy come from Argenteuil? wouldst thou have me stand in front of thee guessing whence a letter comes, and it in thy hand, silly? And the answer put the thought into Héloïse's mind that she had not spoken wisely in mentioning Argenteuil. Her first mistake was followed by a second, for she did not dare to read the letter under Madelon's inquisitive eyes, but threw it on the table beside her, saying: the letter can wait; I am busy reading, Madelon. But she would not betray me, Héloïse said to herself, so why did I not trust her? And opening her letter as soon as Madelon left the room, she read the brief note that Abélard had sent her, saying: I must write to thank you, Héloïse, for your quick

outburst of admiration for my lecture, and I shall be waiting for you in the Cathedral after vespers. That was all. Waiting in the Cathedral after vespers for me, she repeated. Héloïse —who can have given him my name? Alberic or Romuald? It matters little which, she said. What was important was that he knew her name and had written to her. His letter was proof that he did not look upon her as a little fool, so she had been frightened by nothing. He had written her a letter, a letter asking her to meet him in the Cathedral? And she sat lost in an amazed delight at the honour that had befallen her. But why did he want to see her? The reason was not far to seek; he had said that he would like her to attend his lectures, and to make sure of her attendance he sent for her; he wished her to sit under him in the cloister and to take notes like the other pupils, and to put questions to him like the others, though she was only seventeen and had come from the convent of Argenteuil not more than six months ago. But would her uncle allow her to attend Abélard's lectures? He would be only too glad, he was proud of her learning, but if he had not drunk so much wine last night and had left his bed earlier, she would have confided the story of her conduct to him, and he would have remained in the house talking to her, forgetful of his business in the Cathedral, till Abélard's letter came, which she would have had to show him, and he would have said: let us go together to see Abélard. Instead of the great pleasure that awaited her, meeting Abélard alone, hearing him talking to her, she would have sat apart hearing Abélard talking to her uncle, a thing that would be no pleasure to her whatsoever, nor to Abélard; he would have been annoyed with her for showing her letter (for if Abélard had wanted to see the Canon he would have written to him); he would have thought her a little fool, and she would not have been able to explain. He might never have written again, never wished to see me, so what a good job it is for all of us that uncle drank that wine, she said. Uncle has spoken about the benefit I could get by going to the cloister to attend the lectures; true, he was talking of Champeaux, but I couldn't have learnt from Champeaux, I know I couldn't; Abélard would like to teach me and I could learn from Abélard.

Her thought of him brought him before her eyes, and his image set her thinking of the little quarrel overnight between herself and her uncle regarding his appearance. He was short, it is true, but strong and well knit, with fine shoulders. A noble and kindly brow bespoke his vast intelligence and placed him above all men and made all men jealous of him. She had heard him spoken of as proud; she knew many who were proud without just cause, but he was proud—could it be else, since he was acknowledged by all the world as the greatest philosopher of his time, perhaps of all time? She had heard it said that he could not brook an interruption, but she had seen other people fly into a rage about trivial things; Mother Ysabeau, for instance, when a novice came in to ask her a question, interrupting the addition of a column of figures. It was said that he resented contradiction, as well he might, for he knew that all he said was true and could be proved; nor could she blame him for the words he had uttered against Gosvin, offensive though they were. It was part of his genius, and if we are to have genius we must put up with the consequences of genius, a thing that the world will never do; it wants geniuses but would like them just like other people; how stupid the world is, it never can understand. And she stood like one at bay, hating the world for its inability to appreciate Abélard, working herself up into a rage, saying: never is he praised for his kindness, his tolerance; yet these qualities were manifest no later than yesterday, when a student interrupted him in the middle of his lecture to ask him if the Iliad were not more beautiful than reasonable, by no means a stupid question; and that was why Abélard had been at pains to answer the student, to lay aside his own thoughts and apply himself to discovering an answer, which of course he did. And how well he explained that it was reason that gave us beauty; saying that the animals may have preferences, but can have no thought for beauty, for they have not the power to compare one thing with another. And he discovered this wonderful answer in the middle of his lecture, returning to his lecture, easily picking up the thread just where he had left it. How wonderful!

She awoke suddenly though she had not been asleep, and

her first thought on returning to herself (she seemed to have been absent for a long time, for how long she did not know—a few seconds or a few minutes) was to rue the time she had spent over the Latin poets; how much better it would have been if she had given half the time to the Greek philosophers. Plato was always in his mouth; he reverenced Aristotle, but Plato was almost a God in his eyes; and having acquired the right to ransack her uncle's library as she pleased, she opened a closet and sought for the *Timæus,* and spent a couple of hours poring over it; but her mind was so distraught by the prospect of meeting Abélard in a few hours' time in the Cathedral that she failed to fix her attention for long on any page of it. Aristotle is easier, she said, and returning the *Timæus* to its place, she took down the *Categories,* hoping that he would fall in with her mood better than Plato. But her attention wandered from Aristotle as it did from Plato, and she was soon thinking of another philosopher, one of whom she had heard Sister Josiane speak in the convent (Sister Josiane rarely spoke of anybody else), an Irishman who came to France three centuries ago; a petulant, irritable man of violent temper, afterwards killed by his pupils in England, who could bear his despotism no longer. Sister Josiane pressed this man's writings upon all and sundry, and if she had hearkened to the Sister she would be better able to meet Abélard in the Cathedral and talk to him befittingly, but—— Her thoughts seemed to fall into nothing, and she sat for a long while unaware of any thought, in a lethargy, a stupor, from which she awoke surprised to find herself in the company-room.

CHAP. IX.

SHE had not told Madelon from whom her letter came; she had refused to read it in front of her, afraid of her searching eyes, but Madelon never stopped till she knew everything; patient as a cat she watched and waited till she knew, but she never made any use of her knowledge. She can't bear, Héloïse continued, to be ignorant of anything that is going on in the house, that is all, and uncle is often afraid to speak,

walls having ears and speech too, for Madelon—— How else is it that she knows next day what was said overnight in the study? . . . I'd like to get out of the house without her knowing it. And choosing the moment when she thought she might leave without encountering Madelon in the passage, and with all the streets well in her mind that she must take to avoid meeting the Canon on his way home from the Cathedral, Héloïse hurried on, a little vexed and anxious, for why, she said, did he give me a tryst so late in the evening? And why did he choose the Cathedral? It will be as black as night, maybe. But I shall miss him if I stand thinking; and she hurried on through the by-streets, arriving at the Cathedral without being stopped by anybody she knew.

It's blacker even than I thought for, she said, as she pushed through the swing doors; so black it was that she barely escaped falling over some penitents kneeling within the shadows of the first pillars, and as she advanced into the Cathedral she came upon other groups of penitents, all so immersed in God that they lay indifferent whether the passer-by lost her feet or kept them; and indifferent to them as they to her, the girl sought her lover through the gloom of the pillars, peering and stopping to listen but not daring to call his name aloud. At last a voice spoke her name, setting her heart beating violently, for though she could not see the face she knew the voice was Abélard's: it was good of you to come. Good of me? she repeated; but I wanted to come. If there was only a little light. And still picking their way through penitents, they moved up the church, guided by a rim of daylight high up in the roof. I was so glad to get your letter, she said. Tell me why you were glad to get my letter, he asked. You must know very well, she answered, for it is not difficult to guess; because I was ashamed of my conduct and afraid that you would think me a little fool. But I could not help myself, for what you said sounded to me like a prophecy, and it is one. Neither you nor your disciples laughed at me, did you, when you returned to the lecture hall from the cloister where you left me? Laughed! he said, and the accent of indignation that he put upon the word convinced her even more than his letter that she had done no more than to obey a for-

tunate impulse. You were so kind, so thoughtful, and you understood where many another would have failed to understand; but of course you understood, I am talking nonsense; you understand everything, even Héloïse, which is but natural, since you understand Plato and Aristotle. And then, encouraged by his eyes, which she could just see in the darkness, she began to tell him that as soon as she reached home the Canon asked her how it was she had brought no violets home from the woods: and I answered him that I hadn't been to the woods but to the Cathedral; and after telling him about your lesson and giving as good an account of it as I was able (a very poor account of it, it is true, for it was all in a tangle in my head and I could not unravel it yesterday, not even as well as I could to-day), I put questions to him about you, and he told me all your story; how you had given up your lands to your brothers and sisters so that you might be free to wander the world over teaching; and the story seeming to me like some Old Testament story I was carried away by it, almost as I was by your own words. But did you tell him, Abélard asked, that you pressed through the pupils and disciples as I came down from the pulpit, and——? No, she said; I did not tell him that I threw myself at your feet and kissed your hands, but afterwards I saw that I had done wrong in keeping back anything; I suppose I was ashamed to tell it, but I am ashamed no longer, I glory in it; for if one is not to give honour to the greatest philosopher in the world, perhaps the greatest of all time, to whom? But, she continued, after a pause, it fell out that I couldn't tell him, for to-day—— We shall be able to talk better in a side chapel, Abélard said, interrupting her, for penitents were moving about them, and though Héloïse spoke in a very low voice he was afraid that some part of their talk might reach other ears than his. Penitents, he said, are apt to forget their sins when there is anything to overhear; and taking her by the arm, he led her through the church. Not this way, she said; there is a side chapel where we shall be quite alone and where there is a little light; and as she was leading him to it she tried to continue her story, but he said: wait, for I shall be able to listen to you better in the side chapel. As soon as they were in it, he said: you were telling

me that you were unable to tell your uncle—— That I threw myself at your feet? Yes, she said; I intended to tell him this morning, but he was still in bed; and every morning I go to the market with Madelon, our servant—— And when you returned, Abélard interjected, the Canon had left for the Cathedral? No; he did not leave till the afternoon, and I was reading in the company-room, waiting for him, but he left the house without my hearing him. But you told him on returning from my lecture that you had seen me? Yes, she answered; there was no reason why I shouldn't tell him I had been to the cloister. No, there was no reason, Abélard said. But if you would not like me to tell him that you wrote to me and asked me to meet you in the Cathedral—— I shall meet the Canon to-morrow or the next day, and think that my account—— Would be better than mine, she interjected. Of course it would be. But how fortunate it was that I did not hear him leave the house, for if I had, I should have had to show him your letter and he would have stopped and talked to me, and perhaps would have come with me; and he and you would have talked together, and I should have been left out, listening to my uncle, who is often very talkative. You read Latin, he said, every evening together. Now who could have told you that? Alberic or Romuald, of course, who often come to my uncle's house in the rue des Chantres. And they told me, too, he said, that you came last autumn from the Benedictine convent at Argenteuil, the favourite pupil of the nuns there, and that you are already known in Paris as *la très sage Héloïse.* The nuns have praised me to my uncle, and my uncle is proud of my learning, such as it is, but what is it compared to yours? Nothing at all. But I do love the Latin language, and am wondering why we are not talking it instead of the jargon, and why you asked me to meet you in the Cathedral?

The Cathedral is very dark, he answered; and I have many enemies. Is that why we are talking jargon? she asked; because none would believe the story, if it were put about, that the great philosopher Abélard met the learned Héloïse in the Cathedral and held converse in jargon. But you must not speak of the French language as jargon, he answered; it was

not until the last century that the language of the people, spoken only in the fields and in the market-places and on the high roads, but never written in, found its way into literature. Have you not heard of the *Chanson de Roland?* And a language that has an epic poem written in it cannot be spoken of as jargon, the songs of France are all written in French. Have you not heard of the troubadours and trouvères? Héloïse answered that she had heard of the trouvères and the troubadours, but knew nothing of their songs, and Abélard continued to tell her of the progress of the French language: spoken today, he said, in all the castles of the nobles. But you speak it in the rue des Chantres. I speak it to Madelon, and Romuald and Alberic speak it when they come to the rue des Chantres, in the corners. But it is frowned upon by the canons who come to your house from Notre-Dame, Abélard replied. I forgot just now when I said that I had never heard a song in French; some of the students sing in French—— But these songs are frowned upon? Abélard interjected. Yes, just so, she answered. The Church would have Latin spoken by everybody except the working folk, he replied; for the Church wishes the world to remain in ignorance, reserving learning to itself, as its exclusive possession; a mistaken view, for in spite of the Church the jargon, as the ecclesiastics are apt to call it, has become the language of music, and poetry and music and the arts, I have often thought, are as powerful as dialectics. We have therefore art and reason on our side; and the Church will not prevail against us in the end, though the end be far distant. But why, then, asked Héloïse, do you not lecture in French? I should be understood, he answered, only by a handful, for the French spoken in one district is not exactly the same as in another; the language is in the process of formation, and Latin will dominate the lecture-room for many a year to come. But the language of the future is the French language; even the ecclesiastics are obliged to speak it when they call assemblies to urge the people to enlist in Raymond's army, and the welcome given to Pope Urban was really given to the French language. I will never speak of the jargon again, but always of the French language, Héloïse said, half to herself, half to Abélard. An awkward silence

fell between them, and at every moment it became more acute and intense, till it seemed impossible to break it. You asked me to attend your lectures, Héloïse said at last. And you will come, he interjected, his speech returning to him suddenly. She asked him when he would lecture again, and he answered: not till the end of the week. I am lecturing to-morrow and the next day at Ste. Geneviève; but I am afraid I shall never be able to please you again as I did yesterday. Why do you say that? You will. Each time I shall be delighted more than the last, for I shall understand you better, she replied.

He would have liked to have kept her thoughts on himself, and to have spoken to her about herself, but his vanity intervened; and wishing to hear what part of his lecture appealed to her more than any other part, he said: you, who were so deeply moved by my lecture on Faith and Reason, may be able to tell me what part of it you liked best; general statements are good; one should begin by liking the whole, but the Nominalists, and we are all Nominalists to-day, believe that it is only through the parts that we have knowledge of the whole.

You would not have me, a schoolgirl from Argenteuil, advance my reason against yours, master? Not against, he replied; but without repudiating any part you can tell which struck your imagination. Tell me, for to hear will be a help to me. I liked it all, she answered, but the piercing was when you said: it has come to pass that within the last century a new science has been given to us whereby the whole world may be won to Christianity, for then I could barely restrain myself from calling out to you the words of the Chorus in Seneca's *Medea*: new worlds shall be discovered in the age to come, the imprisoning ocean shall be thrown open till there shall be no land alone, no ultima Thule. I remember the play, he replied, though it is many years since I read it. She gathered from his tone that he did not like the play or had forgotten it partially, and she did not feel certain that she had done well to mention it. After thinking a while, he said, Jason goes in search of the Golden Fleece and brings back Medea. In a galley, she cried, with Orpheus singing at the prow. A wonderful story, but not more wonderful than your

own, which I heard last night from my uncle, all of it except the years when, after confounding Champeaux, you fell ill and went away nobody knows whither. Did your uncle not hazard a guess? Abélard asked, and Héloïse answered that her uncle spoke of England and Germany; England especially, where he said you met Roscelin. And in which country do you think I spent those years? I like to think, she said, that you went in search of the Golden Fleece and found a Medea to help you, for without Medea Jason would not have captured the Fleece from the dragon that was set to watch over it; it was Medea's mother, the great sorceress, who gave the poison that Jason threw into the dragon's jaws. So you think that a man cannot conquer unless he has a woman to help him? Abélard asked, and Héloïse, feeling that the question was directed against her, was loath to answer; but her courage came to the rescue, and she replied that it was so in Jason's story and likewise in St. Paul's; for it might have fared ill with Paul if he had not met Eunice at Derbe, she said, who, with her mother, carried him and Barnabas to their house after the populace stoned the Apostles, and kept them there for many months. And did not Eunice, she asked, go to hear Paul preach and was converted by him? And did not Paul circumcise Timothy, lest an uncircumcised man should give offence to the Jews, who were in great numbers? And you will not deny, Abélard, that Eunice gave her son Timothy to Paul to accompany him on all his wanderings, even to Rome; nor was Eunice the only woman in Paul's life, for when he was in great straits for money, did not Lydia, the dyer of purple in Philippi, come to hear him and was converted as Eunice was, and like Eunice, did she not take him to her house? And so it seems to me strange, Abélard, that in all your wanderings you met neither a Eunice nor a Lydia. For you not to have met either puts the doubt on my mind that the women of those days were greater than the women of these, for I can imagine no greater glory for a woman than to be a man's partner in a high enterprise, such as yours is; to carry the faith of Christianity over the world by means of reason, which has not yet been put to the service of Christianity; for that, in my simple way, is how I understand your lesson.

You speak well, Héloïse, very well indeed for a schoolgirl from Argenteuil, and do credit to the nuns that taught you and to the uncle with whom you live; you apprehend my lesson better than another and are from this day my favourite pupil. Other examples of men who owe their fortunes to women might be given. It is true that Æneas left Dido behind to go away to Italy to accomplish the will of the Gods. And you, Abélard, she said, were like Æneas, who left your Medea on the shores of England maybe? There was no Medea, he answered; I fought my battle alone. And it was on his lips to tell that his battle was only just begun and that a woman might come to his aid to win it, but it seemed to him out of keeping to speak words which would certainly be misunderstood; and his mien becoming graver, he said: I wish I had thought of Seneca's words, they would have given additional point to my lecture; for Tiphys was a prophet though there be no new worlds for our ships to discover. The world within us has been enlarged, horizons have been thrown back; and when you return to my lessons you will understand that I always try to exhibit the genius of the Latin poets, for it is part of my teaching that wisdom was not invented yesterday. All my quotations from Seneca and Lucan are made with a view to showing that antiquity was aware that righteousness springs from within and not from without. The spring never runs dry—not altogether. It flows in him who pleads that faith may not divorce reason, as it did in Seneca when he taught that a right action should be performed independently of any desire to please the Gods. And you will remember that Cato declined to consult the Oracles when he went to Africa to defend the republic against Cæsar, saying that he knew what was right and that advice from an Oracle was not needed. The spring was in humanity always; stones were thrown into the spring-head and the spring was closed for a time, but never for long. The history of mankind might be reckoned by the opening and closing of the spring. A thousand years ago Our Lord Jesus released the spring again, and new life was given to the world by it, and at the end of another thousand years the spring is again open. All may drink and be refreshed, and all may hope, for the science of dialectics has

been returned to us, the science of reason, he said; and out of this science be began to build a world of dreams, in which faith and reason would walk hand in hand, a wedded couple, two mighty forces that together would rescue the world from evil. Which, dear child, would disappear were we not loath to use our reason; why we should be afraid of reason it is hard to say, for it is the quality above all others that divides humanity from animality.

Héloïse listened, ravished by the voice that came to her out of the darkness, by the sound of the voice, by the ideas, or by both, she did not know, for she heard him as one hears in a dream; and the awakening was painful, though his words —that he could not talk to her any longer without seeing her —were a compliment to her. Let us go into the cloister where we can see each other; nobody comes to the cloister at this hour. And it was hand in hand that they picked their way once more through the groups of penitents, finding their way almost instinctively to the cloister where their eyes could distinguish the cherry bloom and the figure of Ste. Geneviève showing through the dusk of the quadrangle, and when she looked up in his face he was pleased to see in her a woman that appealed to his passion as much as to his reason. For though by no means beautiful, he said to himself, she is better, for she is to my taste, and forgetful of Faith and Reason, he thought how her figure might be: delicate and subtly made, he said to himself, without harsh angles; and he was near to taking her in his arms, so ardently did her ruddy complexion and her brown silky hair appeal to his senses; and he admired the thick braids wound above the nape. A neck, he said, that carries the head as a stem carries its flower. And she too was satisfied with what her gaze gave back to her, for she read a fixity of purpose and an idea in his brow, and she could not doubt but that he bore the mark of a high destiny.

So you spend your evenings with your uncle reading Seneca? he said, and she answered: I read Seneca in the morning when he goes to the Cathedral; in the evening I read Tibullus, for my uncle took Cicero from me; he wanted to read the *Academics* again. So you read Cicero, Abélard replied. I have only read the *Academics,* she interjected, and that being

a work that Abélard did not know even as well as he knew the *Medea,* he asked her to tell him the plan of the work; and when he had gathered from her that the plan of the *Academics* was to set one inference against another, he said: a most earnest work it must be from your description of it, one to which I must give my attention at once. His mien becoming graver at that moment, she inquired: of what are you thinking, master? A thought has just come to me, he replied, that a book might be written in which the inferences of the Fathers might be set one against the other, as Cicero set the inferences of the philosophers. I shall read the *Academics* before I see you again, and do you look into them too, if you can get the book from your uncle. But shall I see you again, or will you forget me? she asked, looking up into his face. A man does not forget a girl—but I must not pay you compliments, else you will say that I am laughing at you. Within the next few days you shall hear from me.

Within the next few days I shall hear from him, Héloïse repeated, as she picked her way through the rue des Chantres, thinking of the *Academics.* Where is the Canon? she asked Madelon, who opened the door. Asleep in the company-room, Madelon answered. And where hast thou been? Héloïse did not find a prompt answer, and Madelon returned to her kitchen saying: there is a lover or a liker about. And next morning she marvelled greatly at the assiduity with which Héloïse sat poring over her book, for as soon as the Canon left the house she was immersed in Cicero, forgetful of all things except to obtain Abélard's approval, committing some pages to memory, and going to meet him in the Cathedral on the third day, certain that she would be able to answer all his questions. She expected certain questions, and was eager to speak her answers to them, but Abélard seemed to have forgotten Cicero and was much concerned to know why she had not been to the cloister to hear his lesson yesterday. I am not ashamed, she answered, of what I did, but much as I would have liked to have gone to hear you, shyness prevented me; I was afraid of the eyes of Alberic and Romuald and others. Do you know, it is a pity that I yielded to that impulse. It's always a pity, he answered, to take the world into our confidence, but if it

hadn't been for that impulse we might never have known each other. But we should, living in Paris together, she answered; we could not have gone missing each other for long, unless indeed you left Paris again to hide yourself from everybody. My dear Héloïse, he said suddenly, this is the last time we shall meet in the Cathedral. You speak, she cried, as if you were bringing me welcome news. I hope that my news will seem welcome when you have heard it, he answered; and he told her that he had heard from a common friend that the Canon desired to make his acquaintance. Nothing will give me greater pleasure, was my message to the Canon; and on the following day it was our lot to come upon each other on the steps of the Cathedral. If our friend were here now he might make us known to each other, I said, addressing him, at which we laughed heartily and fell into pleasant talk. A pleasant man is Canon Fulbert. There is no need for dismay, Héloïse, but for rejoicing rather. At parting I happened to speak of the difficulty of preparing my lessons, so noisy was my lodging. Whereupon the Canon, who, by repute, loves money dearly, told me that a great part of his house was unoccupied. Come and see it, he said, and if it pleases you to share it with us—— We shall see each other every day, she cried. We shall assuredly; and I shall be your private tutor, for I mentioned that much time remained on my hands after preparing my lessons, leading him to ask me to give you some of my spare time; at which request I made pause. But will you, master? He wishes for your advancement in learning as much as he does for the money I shall pay him, and lest I should prejudice my good fortune (for a pupil like you is indeed a great good fortune), we must part now. It would not be well that we should be seen together. Do not speak to your uncle of these two visits. But I have told him of the lecture, master. Did I do wrong? No; for it is well to be truthful about what cannot be withheld from our enemies, and mine are many, and my reasons for giving you a tryst here would be difficult to explain away; so you will not speak of these meetings to anybody. We shall meet as strangers to-morrow—— Not as strangers, Héloïse, for we have never been strangers. It seems, he said, that I have had you in my mind always. And

I have always been striving after you, master, unwittingly striving.

After parting with her, Abélard called Héloïse back to ask her if she had a story to tell that would explain her absence. She had none in her mind, but did not think she would be asked questions. Madelon will not betray us, she answered, and returned in the hope that no questions would be put to her. The Canon is very angry, were Madelon's words, whispered quickly in her ear as she crossed the threshold. Go to him at once and tell him a good story of the fields and posies. Then Madelon knows, Héloïse said to herself, as she crossed the living-room. At her footsteps the Canon flung open his door, and unable to restrain his words he walked about the room, his large nose more than usually prominent, saying that he had not foreseen such folly as her venturing out in the evening, exposing herself to all dangers. But of the dangers you speak, uncle, I have no knowledge. On these words he cut her short, asking her where she had been; and hardly waiting for an answer, he stormed on again, and it would have been better, perhaps, if she had not attempted to tell him that she had walked under the willow-trees to hear the nightingale singing, for it was there that many robberies had been committed. But, uncle, why so much ado? So much ado! he cried, and possessed of a sudden idea, he turned: go at once to thy bed, child, and without any supper. May I not take the *Academics* of Cicero with me? No, he answered; an unmerited return is thy disobedience. But you never told me, uncle—— Little thou knowest of the means I have been seeking for the completion of thine education. And Héloïse, shocked at his anger and at the deception she had been led into, went to her room ashamed at what had befallen her, finding excuses for her uncle's anger but none for herself, till Madelon told her next morning that the Canon had locked up all the manuscripts before going to the Cathedral.

She began to feel that though she had done wrong her uncle was not free from blame. So I cannot even be trusted with a book, she said; willing to admit that her uncle was within his rights to send her supperless to bed for having left the house in the evening, but what she could not admit was his taking her

books from her; for what reason? That she had left the house in the evening without asking leave was no reason. But after all, it didn't matter; Abélard was coming to live with them and then he couldn't forbid her his books. The Canon is on the stairs, Madelon cried, and Héloïse's face lighted up, for another step caught her ears. It is Abélard's, she said to herself. Pierre Abélard, this is my niece, of whom you have heard, the learned Héloïse of the convent of Argenteuil, the best Latin scholar they have ever had, which I will guarantee her to be. She reads and writes Latin and speaks it as well as any of us in the Cathedral. Now, my dear child, let us forget last night. Héloïse did not answer, and turning again to Abélard, he said: at nine o'clock she was under the willows listening to the nightingale, a place where footpads and dangerous characters loiter, and now she is sour because I sent her to bed supperless. Héloïse, it was for thy good that I spoke angrily to thee. My words are often harsher than my heart. Now wilt thou hear the good news that I have brought? Harken: Abélard, the great Pierre Abélard, the renowned philosopher, has done us the honour to accept a lodging with us, and he hopes that this quiet house, for we are quiet here, will enable him to finish a work which will be of great value to the world, and it is for thee to profit by this great chance of getting instruction from him. It is indeed, Abélard, a great good fortune to myself and to my niece that you are able and willing to come and live with us.

It is I who am obliged to you, Canon Fulbert, and not you to me, Abélard answered, for hardly an hour of my life was my own in the house in which I lived, so besieged was it with pupils and disciples coming to me from all parts. But here I shall be free of trouble, and there will be time for me to put such poor knowledge as is mine at your niece's disposal. Any help that I can be to your niece in her studies shall be given willingly. I have heard her well spoken of and it was a pleasure to me to see her in the cloister. She has told you of my lesson, no doubt? She mentioned it, Canon Fulbert answered, saying that everybody thought it was one of your greatest. It was interrupted by Gosvin of Douai, an impertinent fellow, Abélard replied, for the question he put to

me was not worthy of a scholar. We have here a fair library of the Latin writers, Fulbert said, and taking his keys from his bag he went to the closet and showed his books to Abélard one by one, begging of him to handle them, saying: here is the Æneid that Héloïse has just finished reading, and the *Georgics* are here. Seneca is her last love, and before long she will be speaking of *Medea* to you. I give her into your charge, Pierre Abélard, a girl with much love of her books; an insurgent spirit, too, if last night be characteristic of her. We shall find that out. I give her into your charge and confer on you the right to punish her for her transgressions.

CHAP. X.

IT was during the third lesson that she sat, her eyes wide open, listening, now more than ever intent, for she had dared to confess her doubt to Abélard regarding the importance of the questions now agitating all minds: Nominalism and Realism; and having already learnt much in the preceding lessons, she was not without some knowledge of the answer he would make. He would say that the intellectual quarrel known as Nominalism and Realism led men towards the science of words, the greatest of all, for it was through words that men communicated their ideas one to the other, rising by means of words out of the almost animal to the reasonable state. But he never said anything twice in the same way; and, his eyes and voice compelling the belief of reciprocation in all that might befall them, the silence seemed to swoon about them. It was broken by the sound of lute strings in the street, and giving ear to the song she heard a bass voice troll out a slow, solemn plain-song. He sings too loud, Abélard cried; he overpowers the accompaniment. And flinging the window open, he thrust his head out. How intently he listens, she said to herself, and began to wonder how he could lay aside an important argument so easily for a song.

After some eight bars, on the completion of the theme, the singer, the bass repeated it, answered by another voice starting a fourth higher with a whimsical set of varia-

tions, a rollicking reproof, so to speak, as if the baritone judged his comrade to be overstating his case. I told thee so long ago, but thou wouldst not listen, he seemed to be saying. Anon, a third voice starting again a fourth higher joined in, and the tenor's phrase seemed to be intended to bring about a reconciliation between the bass and the baritone. Life is never so bad or so good as we think for, seemed to be the burden of his charming rigmarole, which he continued heedless of the lamentable tale that the bass continued to relate, deaf to objurgations and reproofs from the baritone. The piece of music ended here, and Héloïse and Abélard expected the minstrels to begin another. But as if relying upon the popularity of the piece they had just sung, or because it was especially asked for, it was sung again after a short interlude in which many other instruments joined with the lutes, an unhappy accident, however, marring the second performance of it, the baritone delaying to intervene with his counsel—an accident that was rectified by Abélard, who sang a new set of variations from the window. Héloïse was afraid that his entry into the concert might provoke a quarrel, but it was accepted cheerfully, and the minstrels sang other pieces, Abélard joining in several and winning applause from the crowd and the musicians themselves, who generously cheered the stranger while picking up the money that he threw to them.

Have I then for a master a great singer as well as a great philosopher? Héloïse asked. And somewhat heedlessly Abélard answered her that it was many a year since he joined in troubadour minstrelsy. But a craft is never put aside altogether, it's always on the watch for us, he said; and looking round the room, and spying a lute hanging on the wall, he went to it. It lacks some strings, but Fulbert must have some if he be a lutinist. Do not leave me, Abélard, to seek them, but tell me how it was that you could devise variations on a theme heard for the first time. Not a difficult thing, he replied, for the words and the music of the song are mine; and if my song pleased thee, let me sing thee another. But to sing I must have a lute. No, do not go, she cried, and her senses inflaming suddenly, her lips sought his, but the sound of footsteps parted their mouths in the middle of a violent kiss, and they fell perforce

to a pretence of study, sitting without raising their eyes from their books, listening. Dost love me, Héloïse? Raising her face from her book, she answered: thou knowest well enough that I do, for thou knowest my heart better than I know it myself; and her truthful eyes set wide in her face were fixed upon him in an innocent yet searching gaze. O Pierre, I am very happy. If thou lovest me, I am happy; kiss me again and as before. Others have loved thee—it could not be else—many. But thou wilt love me and forget them? Yes, I will love thee, Héloïse, he cried. Wilt thou forget all and shall I have all thy love? My love is thine, he answered, present and future. Whereupon she lay upon his shoulder, her eyes half closed, saying: my uncle told me of the surrender of thy lands to thy kindred so that thou mightest be free to wander over France teaching the people. Is it a true story? It is a true story, Héloïse, he answered. I am glad, she murmured, for I would have thee as thou'rt in my mind, one that was called to a task. I always knew that my bent was philosophy—— he began, but at that moment footsteps were heard again about the stair-head, and the lovers were at pains to gain their several seats in time to escape the notice of their visitor, who might be the Canon or Madelon. It was the Canon, and he almost stumbled into the room, talking thickly of minstrelsy in the streets disturbing scholarship. A thing which must not fall out again, for your lessons are—— He stopped speaking and stood rooted, gazing at them, till they began to fear that their guilt was showing in their faces. Your lessons are, Master Abélard, priceless things in all Fransh; that is how I think; and your pupil, Master Abélard, how does she think? Proving herself to be worthy of your attention, is not that so? If not, Master Abélard, you must punish her. A little touch of the birch on our hinder parts . . . good for all of us, especially the young. A thing they know well in convents is the value of —a touch of birch about the buttocksh. Ishn't tha' sho, Master Abélard? Am I not right? Maybe the taste of it lingers in my niece's mind or elsewhere, and maybe not, for good accounts of her always came from the convent; and good pupil wants no birching. But good pupil and good master need a tankard of good wine. The right of every Frenshman is

good wine; and we are all Frensh here, thanks be to God, except Madelon, who is a Breton, but a good Breton; you hear me, don't you? A good Breton. The Canon stood by the great table, a flagon in one hand, surveying the distance between him and the table at which Héloïse and Abélard were sitting in the window, doubtful of his legs, they were that which was drunkenest in him; so unloading the Canon of the flagon and of the tankards, Abélard took him by the arm and helped him to a seat by them, saying that the honour he craved was to pour out wine for a canon of Notre-Dame Cathedral. It is a greater honour, Fulbert replied, for canon to drink with philosopher than for . . . for . . . philosopher to drink with canon; to be sure it is, for there are more canons than philosophers; but there's more difference between one canon and another than there is between philosophers, so it is hard to say—— You 'gree with me, don't you? And understand me to say that there's many feet between Abélard and any other philosopher, Champeaux, Roshlin—mice, says I, mice, mice! Mice get in everywhere, Philosopher Abélard, but great men have to climb up steeple on to vane, up yonder with Plato and Arishtotle, and to drink—— An honour, my word! to drink with philosopher bigger than any Plato—a Realisht he was, or Arishtotle, who was Nominalisht more or less. Am I not right, Philosopher Abélard; am I not right, niece! A lucky girl thou'rt to have the greatest philosopher in the world to teach thee. A lucky girl, a lucky girl, Master Abélard. Let us drink to the health of ph'loshophers. She tells me you spoke of Buddha and Con . . . Con . . . Confucius, and afterwards of Plato and Aristotle, ending of course, for where should we end but at the end of the spire, the shummit, the top of all . . . And on these words the Canon's head fell across the table.

Had it not been for that last tankard we might have guided him to his room, Héloïse said, and bending down, she spoke into her uncle's ear. Abélard lifted him a little, but he fell back, and there seemed to be no hope of pushing or carrying him across the room. I will fetch my cloak, Héloïse said, and place it for a pillow under his head. May I go with thee? Abélard asked. No; stay with my uncle. It might be well to

wake up Madelon, she said, in a loud voice, adding in a whisper: he often rouses out of a stupor and gazes round the room wide awake. At these words Abélard's face darkened. Have a care, Héloïse whispered to him as she escaped from him, for he may be watching us; and when she returned with her cloak she begged Abélard to lift the Canon from the table so that she might place it under his head. Abélard, I beseech you! she cried. May I not kiss thee before we part? he asked. Wouldst thou be parted from me for ever? she replied, but his passion inflamed her and she gave him her mouth. But the nectar of thy tongue—— he cried. Nectar! the Canon said, lifting his head from Héloïse's cloak; a fig for all the nectar in Olympus. Give me wine. He gazed round, seeing nothing, and the lovers ran to their different beds. But he may be roused, Abélard muttered, returning. As well try to lift a mountain, he said, and allowed the Canon to fall back over the table. Not a particle of hope, he sighed, and returned to his bed to fall asleep suddenly. How was it that sleep came so quickly? he asked himself, when his eyes opened. And what awakened me? The birds on the sill, the dog in the street? And considering the question, he lay between sleeping and waking till he remembered that the drunken often rouse at dawn and stagger to their beds. If he has roused a bit, I may be able to lead him to his bed. But no such luck awaited his eyes; the Canon lay where they had left him, snoring among the tankards. Abélard bethought himself of a wet towel, but it failed to rouse Fulbert for more than a few seconds, and he returned to his bed, to awaken later to the sound of lute strings. And after listening, he said: somebody is stringing, or striving to string, a lute, and as he opened his door the Canon came into sight sitting on a stool, one leg tucked under him, the lute on his knee, seemingly too drunk to find the right pegs, and as he turned wrong ones a string snapped. The devil has got hold of the world by the leg or by the cat's gut, he muttered, and was about to throw the lute aside when Abélard came forward to point out that the gut was not so much to blame as the Canon seemed to think, for it had had the grace to break close to the bridge. If you will allow me, sir, and taking the lute out of the Canon's hands, he

retied the string and began to tune it, singing the required note, finding it first in his mind, afterwards on the string. A fine ear, the Canon said, it is that remembers the pitch all this while away from music. But who broke the strings? They were but five when I awoke, so I went to my drawer where I keep them, and broke one myself; quite true, Master Abélard, that I broke the string, but the other strings? Maybe I broke them too, he muttered, as he refilled his tankard. The poison of yesterday is the remedy of to-day, he said, and seemed annoyed when Abélard began to plead that he must finish his dressing. But who will tune the lute? Abélard heard the Canon ask, and a minute after he heard another string snap. I hope he hasn't broken the lute, he said, as he pulled on his hose; for it is a beautiful instrument. And so heedful of it was he that he started from his room to see. The Canon was gone, and picking up the lute that had been recklessly thrown aside, he examined it. He has broken all the strings but two, he said, laying it down, but the lute is safe: delicate as an egg-shell, he said, as he hung it up. And meeting with Madelon at the foot of the stairs, he learnt from her that the Canon was lying down after drinking much cold water. Maybe there is as much water in his belly as wine, she said, and busied herself setting food before Abélard, who ate in silence, exchanging no words with her till he rose from the table saying: when my pupil Héloïse comes from her room, tell her that I have gone down to the river for meditation. I will tell her, Madelon answered, but am I to say that she is to join you, master? Yes, he answered; and with the intention of preparing a discourse, he bethought himself of the warmth and sweetness of the morning: enlivened, he said, with a gentle breeze laden with a faint fragrance of daffodils; and pacing a pathway chequered with the pattern of budding branches, he tried to pick out a subject from among the many he had stored away in his mind. But the almost inaudible gurgle of the river distracted his thoughts from his search of a subject to Héloïse herself, who was truly a wonderful child, a surprising being, more surprising now than the day she threw herself at his feet, and more surprising last night than she was when she kissed his hands in public; those kisses revealed an

exalted soul, but last night's kisses an almost barbaric passion quite unforeseen, and he pondered on the sting of lips so innocently red. An innocent kiss, in spite of its sting, he said; for Nature spoke through her lips, and with, he reflected, a very delightful accent.

It was pleasant to sit recalling her pale brown curling hair, wound so gracefully into a knot above the nape, the pale grey eyes that seemed out of keeping with the rest of her personality; and he fell to thinking that to find so much passion in a child was strange, almost unnatural, and then his thoughts took a different turn, and passing from her mind to her body, he remembered how shapely she was (or seemed to be) under her gown. Her breasts would have been in his hands last night had it not been for that drunken uncle, and his thoughts going still deeper, he said: more child than woman, more woman than child. Which is it? he asked himself; and his imagination taking fire, he began to dream of the perfect shapes he would one day find under her nightgown, and then to think how a mere accident may rob a man of his pleasure. But the memory of her kiss reassured him, and he applied himself once more to the task of trying to discover a subject for discourse in the Cathedral that afternoon. But his thoughts were soon back rifling her body, and the words that they would exchange as they lay side by side, the ecstasy and the turmoil of the senses, the ebbing of desire and the recovery of it again. . . .

But why does she not come, he said, to meet me, instead of leaving me to lose my day in arid meditation? And singing a provincial air, he returned to the rue des Chantres, arriving in time to hear Madelon bringing the dinner from the kitchen, and the Canon talking of the great discourse that they would hear during the afternoon in the cloister. The different dishes were pressed upon Abélard, and he was asked if he had met an inspiration under the willows. The murmur of the Seine irritates instead of soothing, and my discourse to-day will be a failure, Abélard answered. The Canon refused to believe that such a thing could happen. All the same, Abélard's presentiments of a failure in the cloister were fulfilled, the Nominalists agreeing among themselves that the day was

not one for a public argument between Abélard and Champeaux, nor Abélard and Anselm. Nor even between Abélard and Gosvin, cried a severer critic, as he left the Cathedral. These criticisms would not have added anything to Abélard's perceptions of his failure if they had reached his ears. No, do not flatter me; to-day I was stirring up old memories, skimming the froth as it came to the surface—— And he broke away almost abruptly, leaving his friends wondering, asking each other what offence they had been guilty of, never guessing that his head was filled with songs and lute accompaniments and that he must talk with his ancient comrades if only for an hour, and breathe again the air of a tavern in the rue le Pet du Diable. Likely enough, I shall find those of yester night, he said, as he pushed open the door, singing one of his own songs. But who is he that sings without a lute? An old comrade, he answered, and he claimed their company, telling that when they last sang in the rue des Chantres he had joined in from a window, singing a new set of variations over his own theme. So they drank and sang together and told each other stories till the day waned, until it came upon one of the lutinists to say: why not sing thy song again under the window of thy lady-love? But now I am a philosopher, Abélard answered, and the lutinists said: we will give thee a cloak and a lute and thou wilt sing this time the melody itself and we the variations. Abélard replied: be it so, and disguised as a gleeman, he repaired with them to Canon Fulbert's house, where his singing and lute-playing soon gathered a multitude ready to pay for their pleasure and, inadvertently, to keep the Canon waiting for his supper.

This is the end of taking in lodgers, to be kept waiting for supper half-an-hour beyond the time, the Canon fumed, unable to give ear to the music. Uncle, Abélard is among the crowd perhaps, listening to the singing, and will return as soon as it is ended; nor must we believe that the pie is spoilt because Madelon fusses. But my belly, the Canon said, does not fuss without reason; and that man keeps it waiting. The bells have rung the seventh hour and will ring the half-hour presently; yet he keeps me waiting. Whosoever takes in a lodger regrets it. He puts me past my patience. But a lodger to

whom students from all countries come should enable you to extend your patience. It does not, Héloïse, and if Abélard again keeps me waiting for my supper—— You will take him to the door, uncle, Héloïse interrupted, and tell him never to return again, and be sorry for your impatience afterwards. Now listen, the Canon said, are those street singers here again? And going to the window, uncle and niece listened to the song the bass had sung yester evening under the window, now sung by the baritone. Abélard's voice, Héloïse said to herself, and her heart was delightfully flattered that Abélard should come and sing under the window disguised as a gleeman. He has borrowed a hat and cloak, and is singing for me. A beautiful voice, said the Canon, which I should enjoy more if Abélard were not driving my belly to the uttermost of its strength; a rich baritone, soft as velvet, and not raised beyond the range of the voice. I hate a baritone that sings beyond his range. Hush, uncle, for I would listen to the end of the piece. And I would listen too, the Canon replied, were I not thinking of the excellent hard-boiled eggs that that crust contains, and the wine whose fragrance is so mocking to the nose—— O uncle, let me listen.

A fine piece of singing it is, but were it ten times better than it is it could not keep me one moment longer from that pie. Come, Héloïse, let us to it. As soon as his back was turned Héloïse beckoned to Abélard in the street below, and as if he understood her he threw his disguise to the minstrel from whom it was borrowed, and two or three minutes after he was with them, telling the Canon that his appreciation of the minstrels had kept him. They sang well, did they not? Very well indeed, the Canon answered; that baritone, I could have listened to him for an hour had it not been for the pie in front of you, master, for though the singing was good, the pie is better; and now let me fill your glass with wine; we will drink to Madelon's pie and to the minstrel's song, for that too is worthy of a toast; but not another word to me; speak to Héloïse if she will listen, for she is your pupil. I am not, and can think only of ridding myself of the hunger that I have borne too long. Another jug of wine will do neither of us any harm, and there is still another helping for you in

the dish, Abélard. Madelon, the Canon called, another tankard of wine. Ah, the wine is good and smooth on the palate, as good as I have drunken this many a year, and were the minstrels within call I would have them up here to meat and drink, for that piece of music was a fine piece, well turned in its every period. And the baritone—— Yes, the baritone, Abélard answered, has a fine voice: he can troll it out, and if I could remember the melody—— Can't you recall it, Pierre Abélard? Your ear is a keen one, for after hearing a tune once you know it in all its turns and twists. I think that with time I might recall the whole of the piece and give it to you, Reverend Canon, written correctly. I know we have here a great philosopher, the Canon said, and as it would seem he is doubled with a musician, thy fortune, Héloïse, is made, for every girl should know music, and who could teach music better than he who can hear a concert in the street and keep it in his mind, melody and variations? Would you have me join music to my usual instruction, Reverend Canon, of her who is your niece and my pupil? That is a question I must turn over in my head before I can give you an answer, for her thoughts are on the Latin poets and it might not be well to distract her from these by adding music to your instruction. It shall be as you wish, Reverend Canon, Abélard answered, and he pressed more wine on the Canon, hoping that wine and beefsteak, aided and abetted by pigeon-breast and hard-boiled eggs, would induce sleep.

To be kept another night from Héloïse might rob him of all reason, and half-an-hour later, in spite of her prayer for patience, he might have fallen on his knees before her, deeming the Canon to be already asleep. Thou knowest not my uncle, she whispered, drawing him to the window, which was as far as she could take him from the Canon's chair. He may be shamming sleep. Thou knowest not my uncle. He is sly, and were he to suspect us we should be separated for ever. Have a care for my sake, for the hour will not be long in passing, and as soon as he wakes he will have no thought but for his pillow. That hour will be an eternity to me, Abélard replied, and that thou canst bear it without too much suffering casts doubt on thy passion; a poor thing it must be. It cannot

be that thou art aching as I am, Héloïse, he pleaded. But she held her finger up for a sign; she besought silence with her eyes, and pushing him from her, she forced him to read, if not to read, to pretend to read, till with a great cry the Canon rose out of his chair and, without bidding either of them good-night, stumbled from the room. Now we can love each other, Abélard cried. My lover, have patience, for there is a dread in me that my uncle will return. And ere long, as if possessed by evil thoughts, the Canon returned to the room, pleading the need of a book to put him to sleep. It cannot be that he will come back again, Abélard said. It may be that he'll read himself to sleep, she answered, but her eyes said to him that she would not endanger their nuptials with an unseemly interruption; and to help him to further patience she asked him to tell her why he came with the minstrels disguised as one of them, a question that recaptured his kindly humour, and he began twanging the lute while telling her. We have awakened the Canon, he said, laying the lute aside. But it was not Abélard's incontinent strumming that had awakened him; a little insomnia was upon him and he had returned to ask Abélard if he might share the lesson, a request to which Abélard was obliged to accede. Have you, Reverend Canon, any knowledge of the instrument? The Canon answered that he had often tried to learn the lute, but had failed, a failure that was not difficult to understand, for his admission was that he had always found a great difficulty in tuning the instrument. Abélard denied the imperfection of the Canon's ear, and condoned his mistakes when to deny them was impossible. The presence of Héloïse sitting opposite gave him courage to bear with his tormentor; and a full hour had to wear itself away before the Canon's eyes were again loaded with sleep. You must be weary too, he said; so to your rooms, he continued, and they parted, the lovers to lie in their beds angry and disheartened by the evil luck that had befallen them.

And then it seemed to Abélard as if he must escape from the house, and he weighed his career against his love of Héloïse, knowing all the while that he must abide with her. Come what may, he must abide. But to be near her yet without her seemed more than he could bear, and he bethought

himself of the Seine as a means of escape from the sleepless Canon, who continued to wander about the house. Every half-hour his feet were on the stairs. Does he suspect us? Abélard asked himself, and next morning he affected more rage than was in his heart against the Canon, and she answered him: thou knowest what my uncle is, so why rage like this and make me unhappy? Thinkest that I did not rue thine absence from my couch as much as thou? Didst burn for me, Héloïse? he said, and the lovers came to their peace in a kiss—to a momentary peace, for the kiss inflamed Abélard, and he fell to telling how he barely kept himself to his bed, whilst thou, he said, lay indifferent, forgetful of me, perchance. Worse than forgetful of me, for thou wert forgetful of love itself or else would have been by my side, come what may. Was I then so indifferent to love when I was with thee? she asked; so indifferent that I deserve reproaches? And hast thou forgotten that it was the first time I was in a man's arms? I should not reproach thee for indifference, Héloïse; thou wert all thou shouldst have been and more, and that is why a night of abstinence was hard to bear. Sleep was very far from me, and all night I lay thinking of thee. Was that, she asked, so unnatural that thou comest with a complaint on thy lips? Lovers, Héloïse, should think always of each other, and in the courts of love that I visited when I wrote songs for the Comte de Rodebœuf, Queen Elinor decreed that a true lover is enthralled with a perpetual image of his lady-love; it never departs from the mind. She has ruled it thus. Nor wast thou absent for a single moment of the long night, in all becoming lights and shades and in all attitudes exciting to the senses. Didst sleep, then? Héloïse asked. Sleep! not a wink, he answered. The best moment was when between sleeping and waking, thou camest to me with a lamp in thy hand. But, Abélard, I could not come, for Madelon and my uncle talked away the morning on the stairs outside my room, relating of their different sicknesses or else of the rising prices in the market. I could not come to thee, and thou canst not doubt that I am telling thee the truth. I waited, hoping that my uncle and Madelon would part, would stop their chatter and lie down together or separate. I cared not which, for I was

thinking of thee. But at last their chatter lulled me to sleep, and I slept so deeply that if thou hadst come I should have needed shaking before I could welcome thee for a kiss. I should have wished thee to come with a lamp, Héloïse, in thy hand, and all the light of it flowing down thy naked body, for so thou wouldst seem in my eyes more beautiful than in any vain garment. It was thus that I thought of thee all the long hot night through; the door opening and a white arm holding a lamp high. For should it come to pass that we, Héloïse, spend a night or part of a night together it must not be without a lamp. Would it please thee, Abélard, to see me naked? It would be a gracious deed, Héloïse, for thee to come with a lamp to my couch, for this would tell me how vainly I have pictured thee, yet it seemed that thou wert fair enough in my imagination. My hands remember thy small breasts as mere handfuls, and thy face foretells me now the great summer whiteness of thy body. But my summer is not yet come, Abélard, she said; I am but the month of April. Call me not the month of March, for this is a cold month, and I am not cold. A fair month indeed, he answered, is the month of April, one not to be despised, though the month of May is a better month, and the month of June is—— Well, June is a month for the Gods. But thy June, Héloïse, is many months distant, and waiting for it shall be my joy. Wilt grow tired of waiting? she asked. Tired of waiting? How little thou knowest yet about love. A true love never tires or wanes, Héloïse, but is with us always, like our blood, like our breath. I shall never weary of that brow nor those grey, wistful eyes. I thought last night to teach thee many fair practices; wouldst learn from me, Héloïse? I would, and from none other, she said. And wilt come as I picture thee, holding a lamp high, for I would see all thy roundness in the fair glow? But, Abélard, is there naught in me but a body that will waste in thine imagination each time of seeing it? There is much, Héloïse, besides thy body. Thy mind is as agreeable to me; we have spent delightful hours together reading the Latin poets hour after hour without weariness by that window. Abélard, thou hast never wearied of my chatter, though I often feared thou wouldst. But now I hear no word

about Virgil, Ovid, Tibullus and Cicero, only supplications to see me naked. Dost think of me differently now? Not so differently, Héloïse, that I have forgotten thy soul. But can we think of the soul and body at the same time? When thou comest to me, the lamp held high, to learn all the sports of love from me, thou wilt not think of my soul—not then—but of thy pleasure, as I shall think of mine. Yet let it not be said that the soul and the intellect of the woman is forgotten by the man, though he cannot love body and soul at the same time. Each is loved in turn; without love of the body the love of the soul is a poor thing without purpose when the twain are side by side on a couch, nor valid even when thou sittest apart from me in a window-seat; for we cannot think in the presence of the loved one, and still less can we dream; we prepare whilst on the couch or in the window-seat for the hours that are to come when the love lady is not by us. So it is only, Héloïse said, when her body is not by him that the lover admires the woman's mind. But wouldst thou have it otherwise, that he should dream of her body when she is absent and of her mind when she is by him? Abélard, I make no complaint, I am happy in the knowledge that I shall see thee when I return from market, whither I go now with my basket. And do thou profit of this interval to prepare thy lesson, for to-day thou hast to lecture in the Cloister. To-day is not the day that I can take my thoughts off thee, he cried, nor would I take my thoughts from thee if I could. Ask me not, therefore, to prepare a lesson, for I cannot. Nor wouldst thou ask it of me if thou knewest the years of life that I have sacrificed to learning; and now that life comes to me in Héloïse's sweet shape, am I not to take what the Gods have put within my reach? Put thoughts of love by, she said, for an hour. That thing I cannot do, he answered. Go to thy market and leave me to write songs and to play the lute, and return to hear thyself praised, for there is a song singing in my head that I would write for thee. Since it must be that we separate for a little, let the interval be one of commemoration.

WHAT! she cried, on her return, no song for me to hear? And he confessed to being mistaken in his inspiration; words and music had gone awry. I will not believe it, and she asked him to sing to her. The phrase is well enough, he said, but I am too restless to write song or lecture; come, sit upon my knee. She was barely seated thereon when the sound of footsteps alarmed them and Héloïse with much ado skipped to her seat in time. It was Madelon, and as soon as her question had been answered Héloïse said: I suspect her; we shall have to be careful. But as Abélard could not be contented unless he was fondling her, perforce to put herself out of his mind she could not do else than to ask him to tell her the story that was on his lips yesterday.

The Canon has told my story, a tiresome one until I met thee, Héloïse, nor is there any danger of his returning; so come and sit upon my knee again. Do not ask me to risk much for very little, she answered, and a long argument began between them whether the pleasure was greater to Abélard to have Héloïse upon his knee or to Héloïse to be sitting there. As hard a matter, she answered, as Nominalism and Realism. Which knee is Nominalism and which is Realism, and where does Conceptualism, thy theory, lie? she asked, springing away from him, for footsteps seemed once more to be moving by the stair-top; and deceived thereby and by some flattery, he yielded himself to her question whither he had gone when he left Melun in search of rest. Whither I went when my health broke down from long study? It is said that I travelled in Germany and in England—— And that thy humour is various, she interjected, which is not surprising, for there is a philosopher and a poet in thee, and both seeking for rivalry. Yes, he replied, and a wanderer too, as the Canon has related. My lands in Brittany were surrendered to my brothers and sisters so that I might be free to throw myself into philosophy and wander, as thou hast heard, seeking disputations and controversy with all and sundry, thereby gathering much renown and maybe some glory. And thou hast heard from the Canon of the overthrow

of Guillaume de Champeaux and that of Anselm, who in the imagination of the Canon is a man of great genius, but a mistake I would hold this to be, saying rather that Anselm is gifted with a great flow of eloquent phrases, never at a loss in the Assembly Hall; but it is worth no man's while to go to him with a question, for instead of having the question answered and his trouble allayed, he will come back with twenty more doubts, all more irritating than the first. Thou hast heard from the Canon how I taught in Paris after Champeaux's retirement, whom I so worsted in argument that he could no longer find pupils who would listen to him, and of my own school at Ste. Geneviève; thou hast heard, too, of my school at Melun, and how I was told that rest was needed, which was true, for of the sweets of rest I had not tasted for many a year; and that when I was ill and unable to give myself to study, the memory of my already ancient wanderings stirred up a great yearning in me to follow the roads once more: April was coming in; blue and white, according to her wont. One evening I heard the thrush singing under a rising moon, and next morning he sang from an elm bough. There was money in my purse, gaiety in my heart, and a lute on my back, and lodgings I found at nightfall; some were pleasant, none too vile, for all the world was abroad: gleemen, acrobats, pedlars, wayfarers, all like myself, were walking ahead seeking their fortunes. My health returned to me at every mile, for it was April. All the world was dancing and singing; the lambs frolicked up the banks and even the heavy sheep skipped when the lambs returned to them; the rooks tumbled over each other in the soft air, and I said: all is that ever was, even I. But I could no longer teach by the road-side; I was no longer a peripatetic philosopher, and might well have returned to Brittany to my father and mother, and to the old Manor House and lands belonging to it, had it not been that Brittany was a long way off and my strength not great enough for the journey. Moreover, lute-playing is not favoured in Brittany as it is in the pleasant Norman land whither I wandered, exchanging one band of minstrels for another, till the day came when I wearied of three garcil churls whom I had fallen in with on their way to a fair—men

with little knowledge of music, more apt with dogs that they could train to walk on their hind legs, to jump through hoops, to steal and put the blame upon the cat, and many other diversions of the same kind. One of them could play the vielle and another a pair of regals, and with them was a gleemaiden who danced with two great mastiffs, their four paws on her shoulders. Héloïse asked how she was dressed, and Abélard told her that the gleemaiden was gowned according to custom in azure blue with silver spangles on her skirt.

As I have said, these minstrels were on their way to a fair, and not caring to accompany them thither, and not wishing to lower them in their own self-esteem, for to do so is a dangerous thing and might have earned me an evil blow, I feigned to have a return of my illness, and lay down under an oak-tree and bade them good-bye, wishing them, of course, every luck at the fair. They were loath to lose me, for my lute-playing helped them to gather money, but as they could not carry me on their backs, and were without money to buy a horse for me to ride, they departed, and it was with a great unlifting of the spirit that I watched them stumble out of the wood. I must have fallen asleep shortly afterwards and slept maybe for a couple of hours, for the prime of the morning was over when I woke, and looking up I saw a finely accoutred horse bending over me, but he started away from me when I sought to catch his bridle. A horse, I said to myself, belonging to some great noble who will come in search of him; and with some thought at the back of my mind that an acquaintance of this sort would suit my present circumstance, I set myself to capture the horse, which I failed to do till I bethought myself of the plan of filling my hat with pebbles and shaking them, and he, thinking that I was about to bring him corn, let me take him; and I had barely tethered him to a tree when a fine gentleman came riding by, no less a person than the Comte de Rodebœuf mounted on one of his servants' horses, who, on seeing his horse tethered, said: thou shalt be rewarded for thy capture of my horse, to which I answered: I am a gentleman like thyself, and for the slight service that I have rendered thee I need but the story how it fell out for thy horse

to escape, whereupon he told me that his horse had stepped into a rabbit burrow and thrown him. Thy horse came sniffing me while I lay asleep, poking me up as if he missed a master. On that our talk languished. But it broke out again on seeing a lute by me; a gentleman like myself thou art certainly, said Rodebœuf, from thy speech I can tell that, and the lute tells that thou'rt a musician like myself. So if it be not unpleasing to thee we will sing a song together, for the air is pleasant in this wood, still and sweet. After hearing me sing, he said: we must not part like this. My castle is near by and it is open to thee as long as it pleases thee to remain with me. A fine voice is thine and I have little doubt thou'rt skilled in composition. But didst return, Abélard, with the Comte de Rodebœuf? Not for many months after, Abélard answered, for the Comte de Rodebœuf is a great trouvère, and spring being by again he had just left his castle to visit his neighbours to help them to forget the tedium of the winter months they had come through with lute-playing and song.

So I entered into his service as head gleeman. We journeyed on, I by the Comte's side, the gleemen singing in front and behind us, attracting the folk working in the fields, who came to the hedges to listen to us as we passed twanging our lutes, for our thoughts were set on the songs we would sing at the castle of Raymond of Castel-Rousillon some miles distant. We exchanged friendly greetings with the folk as we journeyed through the still sweet daytime, taking heed of all the sights and sounds of April. A very pleasant ride it was, so pleasant that thou wouldst have stopped often to snuff the fragrances that the breeze carried across the glades and the scent of the wallflowers when we passed under castle walls. A spring morning unfolding blue and white among lovely haze, with birds singing in every covert, is easier to remember than a spring evening, but one evening is still clear in memory, so quietly did it pass into night without vulgar lights shining through the park trees, only the drone of frogs in the rushy ponds and ditches as we approached the great gateway of Raymond's castle, in front of which we blew our horns. At their blast, the sleepy rooks rose out of the branches, and they were still clamorous in the air when the Comte's retainers

began to run from the doorways and the projecting corners of the castle. The Comte de Rodebœuf was assisted from his horse and relieved of his armour. A cloak edged with fur was thrown about him, and we entered the castle and gave display of our art in the minstrel gallery, the Comte Raymond de Castel-Rousillon and his wife Margherita sitting at the end of the hall with the Comte de Rodebœuf. My name was no longer Pierre Abélard, but Lucien de Marolle, and the song that had been turning in my mind during the ride thither will be found written in the book kept for the recording of the songs composed in honour of the castle. About this castle there was a green sward spread with embroidered tapestries, and the ladies sat thereon and we sang to them from time to time, Margherita listening so eagerly to the Comte de Rodebœuf, who asked me to accompany him, that I knew she loved him and valued his praises more than any other thing. I learned too that the Comte Raymond de Castel-Rousillon was unsuspicious of his wife's infidelity. But art thou sure, Abélard, of his wife's infidelity? One is never sure of such things. But it seems as if it could not be otherwise. Be this as it may, the Comte de Rodebœuf was much pleased with me for the song that I wrote praising his lady's beauty and for the care I took in casting no eye upon her that might tempt her thoughts from him.

One day we were up betimes, and in the same pleasant sunshine we started forth to journey to another castle where a court of love and a great tournament was to be held. A court of love, Héloïse, is a court in which all the quarrels of lovers and the rights of lovers and the wrongs of lovers are weighed and adjusted by great ladies assembled for the purpose. And the castle to which we were going was the Castle of Autoford. The Comte thereof was expecting the most celebrated troubadours, gleemen and knights-errant to rejoice in the recovery of Geoffrey of Camborne from his exceeding jealousy, a jealousy that had preyed upon him, leaving him no peace, a jealousy so cruel that he could not abide any man inside his castle—all were suspected of having designs upon his wife; and if the visitor stayed on for a while, the Comte would call to his servant to prepare his bath, saying that he bathed be-

fore dinner, and if the guest did not accept the intimation and hurry away, Geoffrey would ask him to stay for dinner, having care that the food set before him would be so bad that he would never return again. At last the Comte's jealousy turned to a sort of madness, for 'tis certainly madness to keep a woman locked up in a tower with two maids to wait upon her, to forget all cleanliness of habit and go to her in rags and with a beard matted like a sheaf of oats badly tied together. Yet this was the wont of Geoffrey, and the unfortunate Flamietta, his wife, about whom all the country-side was speaking, telling stories of her, saying that her despair was so great that she had confessed to her maid-servants Alice and Margherita that she thought it was God's great favour that she had not borne a child, for a child might have awakened love again; and that it was better that love should cease in her, she being without courage, without hope. At which telling her two maids, Alice and Margherita, wept, for they were attached to their mistress. No greater misfortune can befall me now, she said to them, than that one of you should leave me; at which they protested that neither had thought to do such a thing, that lovers did not tempt them, and that they would sooner die unloved than be separated from their beloved mistress.

Flamietta looked into their eyes and doubted them, as well she might, for Alice was at that moment planning to leave her, but she had no heart to tell her mistress of her design. But day by day her need of love became more pressing, till at last she came to the Comtesse Flamietta with the truth on her tongue, that she could no longer keep her thoughts from her betrothed, nor could he keep his from her: they must die or enjoy one another. Whereupon the unhappy Flamietta fell to weeping, saying that her heart had told her that the thing she dreaded was about to befall her. But Alice bent over her mistress, saying that she must not grieve so. For another servant will come, she said, who will serve you better than I. Give me service that thou hast not been able to give? What means this talk? It is as I say, mistress, Alice answered, and she spoke of a maidservant at the castle who had come into the service of the Lord of Camborne: so that she might see

your beauty, madam, as it passes by on the terrace. But I never pass on the terrace, cried Flamietta. I am locked in this tower and see nobody except a man whose habit is unclean and whose beard is like grass in autumn. What story dost thou tell me? Alice was loath to answer. But Margherita came by and said: what Alice tells you, madam, is the truth; the new maidservant will bring to you a great joy. Bring a great joy to me? Flamietta repeated, vaguely disturbed in a reason that had nearly left her. But no entreaty enforced by tears could wean Alice from her design, and Flamietta cried out: thou goest to happiness leaving me in grief. The last words that Flamietta heard as she lay sobbing her grief away were: the new maid will be a better help to you, madam, than I can be—words that she could put no meaning upon. Nor did she try to understand what had befallen her when she heard the word alas! on the new maidservant's lips. Is my lot so pitiful that even my servant maid pities me? She must not tie the latchet of my shoe again, she said to Margherita as soon as the new maid was out of hearing. And it was then that Margherita confided the truth into her mistress's ear, saying: this servant maid who has just tied the latchet of your shoe, lady, is no servant maid at all, but Gerard de Montador, who by virtue of his youth and beauty is enabled to deceive all in this impersonation. The story of the Comte's cruelty to you, madam, has gone abroad, and is told everywhere, and it has reached his ears in many stories which stirred his heart, and there being no other way to see you but to offer himself as maidservant in the castle in the hope that one day one of thy personal attendants might be dismissed, he engaged himself to the cook as scullery-maid. As no one was dismissed, he bribed Alice? Flamietta said. Yes, returned Margherita, and with a large sum of money that will enable her to make another man happy. So all is for your good, madam, if you will but believe. But it is a fairy tale thou'rt telling me, Margherita, for which thou deservest punishment, and if my lord should know—— Hush, my lady, it is no untruthful story that I am telling you, but the very truth, as indeed it will be easy for you to ascertain this very night, for Matilda sleeps in my room and you have but to call her.

But a man who can disguise himself as a girl is not worthy to be called to a woman's bed. On that matter I can tell you nothing, only you can test him fairly. At which Flamietta's face flushed, and then turned to white, for she was sorely perplexed whether to believe Margherita and call Matilda to her bed or to tell the whole tale to the Comte and have the girl removed from her service. And two or three days passed in the perplexity thereof, for Matilda's conduct was always what a girl's should be, and the only difference in it from that of any other girl's was her sadness, for each time she came near her mistress she sighed. Only once did their eyes meet, and the glance awakened in Flamietta a desire to make an end of the matter for good or for evil by calling out in the night-time, saying that the crashing of the thunder frightened her. But the summer may pass without a storm. There are always noises in the turret, she said, and to-night the turret may be more disquieting than usual, and she fell to listening to the wind, which soon after began to rise. Every howl was welcomed by Flamietta as if it were a song. I am frightened. What sounds are these? I am frightened. Margherita, come to me. Myself, mistress, am too frightened by the noises to leave my bed, but I am sending Matilda, who is more courageous than I am. A dreadful moment it was for Flamietta while Matilda crossed the room. Margherita tells me that you are frightened, madam. In a quiver Flamietta answered: yes, Matilda; I am frightened by the wind in the tower. But hast thou no fear? None, mistress, when I am by you. Nor have I, Flamietta said, now that thou'rt here, but I quake as I lie alone, hearing strange sounds about me. Shall I sit by you, madam, till sleep comes? But it will be cold sitting by me. Would you have me for a bed companion? Matilda asked. For answer Flamietta lifted the bedclothes and Matilda entered the bed, and when they were close together side by side and fear had passed away from Flamietta she began to ask Matilda why she sighed so often and why the word alas! was often on her lips. To these questions Matilda answered that she was mortally in love and was without hope or strength or will. Margherita tells me a strange story that all this great love is given to me, and thou art not a woman, but I know

not whether to believe it. Thou dost not answer, Matilda, Flamietta said, breaking a long pause. But lying beside each other words are not needed, the servant said. I am frightened, put thy arms about me, which Matilda did, and they lay still, only conscious of the other's breath. So it is true, Flamietta cried suddenly, but at that moment there was a great scuffling of daws in the chimney, and Flamietta believed for a while that the Comte was at the door. But thou must have loved me very much to have accepted this disguise for my sake. But when I saw your beauty, lady, passing me on the terrace, I was recompensed. But was my beauty enough? A vain question indeed to ask me, since I am with you and have proven my love. Thou wouldst not withhold anything from me? Indeed thou hast earned all I have to give thee, Gerard. Whereupon sighs took the place of words, and for many nights afterwards the lovers enjoyed one another, for it so happened that the Comte was ill and kept to his chamber. On his return to his wife, Flamietta hated him more than she had done before, for he put the sweet presence of Gerard out of her reach, and while he was pressing her from behind the thought came to her that Gerard might be enjoying sweet felicity in Margherita's arms. Flamietta trusted her maidservant, but Margherita must not be tried past her strength, and how was she to resist Gerard should he be moved to pass from his bed to hers, and the thought that Gerard should taste with another the joy he had tasted with her helped her to apprehend the torture that Gerard had suffered for her sake, becoming a kitchen wench for it. Moreover out of her jealousy came the knowledge of Geoffrey's long agony. But her mood of pity was soon over, and the pillow was wet with her tears so frequently that the Comte began to believe that his wife had no heart to love any man. I am different now, she said, from what I was; have pity on me. And feeling that he was secure from all rivalry, he said to her one day: I see that such indifference to love has come upon thee that thou canst keep thyself strict as a virgin, and she answered him: I think that I can keep myself strict from wicked pleasures, words that caused Gerard, who was standing by with his mistress's slippers in his hand, to drop one of them, a slight act indeed

in itself, not meriting Geoffrey's censure that she was an unmannerly wench to stand by while—so great was the Comte's rage that he was not at pains to finish his sentence, but Gerard heard him say as he was thrown from the room—while I am talking with my wife. I did not notice her presence, the Comte said, when he returned to Flamietta; an untaught girl, no proper servant for thee. Flamietta mentioned that the girl understood little of what was being said and that it was not the Comte's words that caused her to drop the slipper but fingers that could not be relied upon. Thou must have another maidservant, the Comte answered, to which Flamietta answered that though the girl dropped things occasionally she was devoted to her, especially in times of storm; when the wind sent the mortar clattering down the chimney and strange noises were heard in the turret Matilda's presence pacified and soothed her with good sense. The old green light of jealousy came into the Comte's eyes, and Flamietta turned aside, saying to herself: jealousy leaves us no repose of mind. It was then the thought came to her that the Comte might order Gerard a whipping, which would reveal all and bring him his death, but being devoured at the same time with the thought that every night he might be lying in sweet felicity in Margherita's arms she came to an understanding the next day with Gerard that he must not waste his life in a girl's habit for love of her, but must earn his love in a knightly combat. I shall weep for thee, Gerard, in secret. And I shall sing thy beauty where'er I go, Gerard answered.

And the next day, when the Comte asked: where is Matilda? Flamietta called her soul into her eyes and said: my dear husband, hast thou forgotten that she displeased thee yesterday by standing by whilst thou wast talking to me? She is gone? cried the Comte. In obedience to thy wishes, Flamietta answered, by these words plucking the last sting of jealousy out of the Comte's heart, and wellnigh freeing herself from all suspicion of loitering passion by speaking of love with contempt whenever it came to be spoken of, almost daring to aver that she had never found pleasure in the naked battle. Are we not happier now that it is over? she asked him, adding that much else was in the world to admire, her voice sinking into

carelessness as she spoke of chivalry and knight-errantry, for she did not wish it to be known to the Comte that tidings had reached her that a young knight, Gerard de Montador, was now winning great renown in all the lists in Provence. But of him the Comte did not fail to receive tidings, and not many weeks after he told her that no knight had been found to withstand Gerard in the field of chivalry and romance, for Gerard was as skilful with words as he was with the lance and sword. Wilt tell me, dear Geoffrey, if we shall see this renowned knight? she said; for one day I would see him and a noble rival coming to the clash.

The Comte bore her wish in mind, and was glad when a letter came to him from Comte Raymond of Chaudlieu telling that a young knight, Gerard de Montador, was coming from Provence to his castle and would give examples of his prowess in singing and in tilting. A great assembly was expected, but it would not be complete without the presence of Comte Geoffrey de Camborne, bringing with him his wife Flamietta. It is known far and widely that we have been at variance, Geoffrey said, and this occasion is felicitous to show that I no longer am afraid to trust thee. Flamietta's instinct put appropriate answer into her mouth. I would be seen with thee in public, she said, for thou hast become the man again whom I wedded. Thy beard is trimmed and thou wearest raiment in keeping with thy nobility. And both happy in different anticipations, the twain drove in their great coach to the castle of Chaudlieu, where Flamietta met Gerard, who, with no sign of wit in his face or in his manner towards her, asked if he might wear her badge on his arm in the lists. And Flamietta, with an equal witlessness, turned to her husband: Gerard de Montador would wear my badge on his arm. To which the Comte answered that he, too, would be honoured if Gerard de Montador wore his wife's badge in the lists, for he had heard of the young knight's prowess and knew that there was no danger of his being overthrown.

And Flamietta's beauty drew the knights about her. All were her suitors, and Geoffrey's trust in his wife was praised in all the groups. It was remarked that never had a greater change come upon a man, and that much honour was due to

Flamietta for the transformation of an unkempt madman into a courtly gentleman. Wherever she went Flamietta was followed by a crowd of knights; and Geoffrey and Gerard, as they walked together, were spoken of as souls created for one another, who had wandered for long apart and met at last. Gerard bore Flamietta's badge through the tournament without failure, and when the poems written by the knights in honour of the ladies whose badges they had worn were read, many were admired, but the poem that exceeded all the others in intricacy of metre and richness of rhyme was written by Gerard de Montador. It touched all hearts, and none was so deeply moved as Geoffrey, who thanked Gerard for having celebrated his wife in such noble words.

Geoffrey, Gerard and Flamietta returned together, the Comte on horseback, Gerard and Flamietta in the coach—Geoffrey would hear of no other departure, and we all marvelled, Abélard said, as we saw them go away together, in our cynical humour believing that the friendship that had ripened so suddenly would drop as suddenly from its stalk. But did it? Héloïse asked. No; the three lived together happily ever afterwards, Abélard answered, and the quarrels rising, for quarrels rise among those who love each other, were settled amicably with skill and tact by Geoffrey; and his fame of peacemaker was extended from his own household to other households, till a proverb rose up in the country that bad beginnings make good ends. But how did it become known that Gerard de Montador had served once in Geoffrey's kitchen so that he might see Flamietta's beauty as it passed on the terrace? Alice, the maidservant, told the story, Abélard answered. And after the tournament at the castle of Chaudlieu, whither wentest thou, Abélard?

We wandered from castle to castle, meeting the same knights and ladies, hearing the same stories, singing the same songs, some new ones, of course; but the new ones had begun to seem to me like the old ones, and the Comte de Rodebœuf, a friend at first, began to seem like an enemy. He was not changed towards me, nor was I changed towards him, but my heart was not in all this singing and psaltery, and when the summer was at wane at the end of September, and our wandering not

yet at an end, though the woods were red, my heart misgave me; but Rodebœuf would not hear of my departure, and being weak I followed him to his castle, arriving thither among autumn rains and a whirl of leaves. And the winter went by stringing lutes and playing them, writing songs and wondering which Margherita would like, Mathieu's or mine, for he often sang mine to her when he liked mine better than his own. But though he liked mine better than his, he was sad when Margherita preferred them; she had a fine ear, and my musical turns of phrase were often less trite. We were always going back and forth, they coming to our castle and we going to theirs. It may have been that if Rodebœuf had left me more time for my own thoughts I might have forgotten philosophy and given my life to lute-playing and singing. A man's fate hangs on a little thread. Margherita de Castel-Rousillon was Rodebœuf's mistress? Héloïse interrupted. Yes, Abélard answered, and he was about to begin a story about her when Héloïse said: how quiet, how still the house seems. It would seem that we are alone in it, Abélard answered. We are indeed, Héloïse replied. Half-an-hour ago Madelon shut the door behind her, and my uncle is at vespers. At these words a strange disquiet fell upon them, and they stood looking at each other, each with a choking in the throat.

CHAP. XII.

AS they crossed the company-room towards the window Héloïse put her hand into his arm, and they stopped at the stair-top to listen. No one is in the house, he said; and that he might regale his eyes upon her womanly shapes afresh he asked her to loosen her girdle, and she, being without thought but obedience to him, did so, saying: do not look too closely at me, lest thou weary of seeing me. At which he laughed, and fell to talking of the beauty of many parts of her, till, overcome by a sudden reverence, he seized her hand and kissed it. Sing to me, she said, giving him the lute, and he sang his translation of one of the beautiful *albes* (dawn songs) of Provence, that one in which the lovers lie together in an orchard, the

woman bemoaning the passing of the night, for the day will take her friend from her; her hope is that the watcher will perceive his mistake, and that the dawn is still afar; but she knows that this is not so, and cries: ah God, ah God, the dawn! it comes so soon. In each stanza a new phase of the night's passing is narrated. The ousels singing in the meadows remind her again of the watcher and force from her the passionate cry: ah God, ah God, the dawn! it comes so soon. The air rises cool through the orchard ways, she drinks it, but it is not as sweet to her as her lover's breath that only can assuage her thirst, and once more the cry breaks from her lips: ah God, ah God, the dawn! it comes so soon. The lover answers that his lady is fair and gentle and has won many hearts, but to one only is she true, to his heart, which now cries out the passionate cry: ah God, ah God, the dawn! it comes so soon.

The perfection of the poem, its words, its tune and the singing of it raised Héloïse's truthful eyes, and she fixed them on her lover, who, singing softly in her ear, his breath fanning her cheek, moving the soft down on her neck, repeated the first stanza:

> In the orchard and beneath a hawthorn-tree
> The twain lie hand on hand and knee to knee
> Until the watchman cries, the planets flee,
> Ah God! ah God! the dawn! it comes so soon.

The troubadours have written many beautiful verses, he said, but none more perfect than this song. The orchards, she answered, were coming into flower when we met, beloved. The orchards are still in flower, and to-morrow we might be lying under the summer skies hand on hand and knee to knee, seeing the stars through the leaves and feeling the breeze grow colder as the night passes into dusk. Every morning the ousels are singing in the hawthorns, but we are not about to hear them. The season is passing; soon the ousels will cease to sing and we shall hearken to the cuckoo. Ah God, ah God, the season goes too soon. But the season is still with us. Abélard, if I had not met thee should I have lived out my

youth and virginity and gone down into old age without knowing love? If thou hadst not come, should I have loved another? Thine eyes tell me that thou thinkest another would have satisfied me if I had not seen thee, yet it seems to me that thou wast always part of me, and if chance had not given thee to me all others would have seemed worthless. Abélard, thou art a great philosopher, yet these things thou durst not make plain. It cannot be that I could have loved another as I love thee, but thou hast loved often and loved much before thou sawest me. I love thee, Héloïse, and we must take the love that God gives us. If a boy loves a married woman he learns from her much that she would not have been able to teach him if she had not learnt from others, and he should be thankful to his predecessors—— But I needed no teaching, Héloïse interrupted, for I knew love from the moment I saw thee. Thy name affrighted me when I first heard it, stirring a sense of fear in me. I remember it all now. But no, it was not fear, Abélard, but the ringing of my heart telling the destiny that awaited me. Is it true that I should have lived all my life without knowing what love is if I had not met thee? I wonder. Love is the singing string in a woman's life. Hear it, Abélard, she said, taking the lute from him; that is my string; life would be like the lute without it. Should I have dreamed a love and been faithful to my dream, Abélard? Has such a thing never fallen out that a man should hide himself away from reality, almost spurn it, so that he might bring himself closer to his dream? Such a lover may have been, Héloïse, for love takes strange turns, weaving strange stories, making fools of men and heroes, too. But of such a lover I know naught, Abélard answered. Ah, there was one Godfrey Rudel, a true knight and a good singer of songs, sought after by ladies, but who denied himself to all for the sake of his dream. Did women seek him for his beauty, his art, or for his renown? Héloïse asked. And Abélard replied that Rudel was not ill-favoured, tall and slim, and walking with a stoop, deep in his dream, seeing his princess far away more clearly than the women about him. To win her love, he said, I must go to her pure; she would divine an impurity were I guilty of one, and would deem me unworthy of her love, as indeed I

should be. With such answers he strove against those who would rob him of his purity, thereby humiliating the lustful and the capricious by his faith that her name would be made known to him in good time. And how came the announcement to him, tell me? Héloïse said. Through a bard from a far country, singing in a court of love of Idena of Rathmoule, who waited far for her lover in Ireland. At these words: Idena of Rathmoule, a light of dawn came into his face; he withdrew from the hall, and soon it began to be whispered throughout the assembly that tidings had come to Godfrey of his princess far away.

My good friends, I have sung my last song here, he said, when he returned; if I sing again it will be elsewhere. All asked: but wilt thou not return? No, he answered, his voice touching a sort of ecstasy, I go to my fate. But why should not thy lady return with thee? he was asked. To this question he gave no answer, and walked henceforth by the harper's side, hearing from him that Idena of Rathmoule lived in a castle by a lake in a forest, and that she always said that a song would come to her from over sea. Godfrey asked if Idena was wedded, and if there were singers in her own country to proclaim her beauty. The harper could make no answer, or would make none, but his silence made no change in Godfrey, who said to his friends: the time has come for me to bid you farewell. It was then that his friends saw that his eyes were hollow, without light, and they muttered: she has cast a spell upon him from afar, a sorceress she is who desires his death, not his life, whom he will not live to see. But though he melted on the voyage almost out of human shape, he reached the distant island alive, and on reaching it the harper was sent forth right to the lady's castle to tell her that a knight from the far land of Provence had heard her name from O'Moran, the harper, and recognising her as his fate he had come to her without knowledge of how she would receive him, certain, however, that he was obeying the will of God. The lady stood elated by her luck, saying: God is good; He has sent me my dream lover; and at once the preparations for meeting him were begun. But these took a long time, Godfrey waiting anxious but growing feebler as the days went by, till at last

it came to be doubted by himself and his physicians if he would live long enough to see Idena with his bodily eyes. But it was granted to him to see her as plainly with these eyes as he had seen her with the eyes of his soul. So thou hast come to me, he said, from thy western castle, beautiful as in the dream. And thou art the Godfrey I saw in my dream, she answered, for the dying Godfrey was hidden from her. Reality and dream had turned to one, and on being told that Godfrey was near to death, she fell upon her knees and prayed that his life might be spared. But there are bonds that cannot be loosened, and Godfrey's turn had come. All life now, she said, has ended for me; and going to a nunnery, she lived in prayer and abstinence, dreaming always of their meeting in eternity, till she fell sick in her turn, and physicians assembled about her bed. To their grave words of warning, she enswered: why all this sadness, for am I not going to him who is waiting for me? Of all my life this is the most joyful moment. Till the very last she continued to give instructions regarding the great tomb which the masons were still building for them. Abélard ceased speaking, and it was Héloïse who broke the pause that followed the narrative of the life and death of two great lovers: canst tell me if our destiny is as beautiful and as sad as theirs? Thou canst not tell, Abélard, though thou art a great philosopher. We are but blind mice, and philosophy does not help us in the straits of our lives. Thou dost not know whether if Godfrey had foreseen his death he would have sought it in Ireland or lived his life shabbily amid the vines and olives of Provence. Godfrey, said Abélard, would not have lived his life shabbily, for that is the sin against the Holy Ghost. Come what may, I should have gone to thee, Héloïse, and on these words a great silence fell between them, and when the silence became strained he broke the pause, saying that he did not know why they were not out and enjoying the sun. Héloïse answered: we are not sitting under the willows, lest we should be seen by the folk coming and going over the Great Bridge; I have often longed to go for walks with thee. And these words awakened the thought, never very far away from Abélard's consideration,

that sooner or later he would have to leave Fulbert's house to take Orders.

To break this second silence, more irritating than the first, he spoke of the river so idly lapping itself to the sea, but in no hurry to reach it. A wise river truly, for the season is pleasant here, the air full of circling swallows. A happy month indeed they have had above the river. A long way above it, Héloïse said, for the swallows do not come down to the river till rain is nigh—— And we have not had a shower for nearly two months, Abélard interrupted. Two months of summer-time wearies us, for we are northern folk, and too much sun makes us unhappy. Our taste is for a few lovely days, and then one or two drenching rains to brighten the foliage and kill the flies. But we need not, said Abélard, fear the folk coming and going over the left bridge; the bridge is empty now. Moreover, why should we not walk together under the willows by the river's edge? Let us go, she said; but bring thy lute with thee, Abélard, for I would have thee sing some more *albes*. But why sing *albes* in the evening? Abélard asked. I'll bring the lute and will sing a beautiful serventes, and they descended the stairs into the street, talking of Bertram, one of the great singers of Provence, and she heard Abélard say that he would sing one of Bertram's beautiful serventes to her, telling how France is to-day a land of song; how everywhere voices are singing praise of young leaves and flowers, singing like the birds, without thought that the world has risen out of winter, singing happily without knowledge. Then the cause of thy laying the lute aside, Héloïse answered, was the knowledge that there are many singers and but one philosopher. Abélard's eyes smiled in recognition of the compliment, and he said: our winter was truly a long one, five hundred years, but man has begun to use his reason again and religion must conform to man's new condition, and it is because religion must be serious (by serious I mean reasonable) that I laid aside the lute. But will the Church allow religion to be reasonable? she asked. It is to save the Church, he answered, that I sacrificed art for phlosophy. Sacrificed art for philosophy, she repeated; alas, was the sacrifice necessary? Will the world be as beautiful again as it was in Virgil's time? It was

in many ways more beautiful than ever it will be again, he answered, but we cannot go back, even if we would. Jesus was born and taught in Galilee. I know not how it is, Héloïse answered, but I never could take any interest in religion. Never take any interest in religion? he repeated, deeply concerned, for her words seemed to Abélard an avowal of her whole nature. And they did not speak again for a long time, and when they rose to their feet the stars were springing in the sky, and they wandered home feeling that the hour of love was approaching for them both. But suddenly, on their way home, Héloïse broke the silence: Abélard, I have forgotten to point out to thee the kingfisher's nest; it is on the bank below us.

CHAP. XIII.

ABÉLARD, she said, one day, though she struggled against the words that overflowed her lips in spite of herself: Abélard, is it true that the time has not come to return to thy good friend philosophy? A question that at once set him telling her that his present bout of singing and lute-playing was in accordance with the general humour of the world; and failing to satisfy her that even the exception to the rule must return to the rule for fortification against eccentricity, he reminded her that for years his life was given over to work and nothing but work. Thou are my recompense for those patient years, he said. Héloïse found it hard not to accept this plea, but her heart misgave her. Abélard, she said, thou art the great philosopher the world has been waiting for; I would not rob the world of thy gift, even for my own pleasure and thine. Wouldst drive me away from thee into the schools again? No, Abélard, I would not, she answered; but it cannot be harmful to remind thee of thine own words. Hast thou not said many times that there is no advancement for a layman, and the meaning of this is that thy career is in the Church. Wouldst then, Héloïse, have me leave thee? Leave me? Héloïse answered. I would not have thee leave me, but I would have thee a great man. But, Héloïse, thy love for me is not because I am a great philosopher? Answer me, Héloïse: if I had been a mere

minstrel wouldst thou not have loved me? Abélard, a riddle thou art putting to me, for can I think of thee else than as a great philosopher? Was it not as a philosopher that I first saw thee? Was it not as a philosopher that I learnt to love thee? But, Héloïse, I should have loved thee as a peasant girl. I know naught of man's love of woman, only how thou didst love me, Héloïse replied. How did I begin to love thee, Héloïse, and what prompted my love? I would hear the truth, for I have no knowledge of it. I only know that I love Héloïse. Thine eyes took pleasure in me, though I am not as beautiful as many another; still I was made for thine eyes. So it is only through the eye that I love thee, Héloïse, and all thy learning counts for no part of my love? Abélard, thou are pleased that I can talk to thee about thy lectures and appreciate them, and I am glad that my Latin is learned enough to put thy manuscripts into closer accord with the ancient language. Am I saying too much, Abélard? Not enough, Héloïse; thy help is valuable; together we write Latin better than we write it singly. I fetch thee ideas and thou'rt apt with a turn of phrase more like Cicero and Seneca than any that I can devise without much thought. Always kindly towards me, she answered, and disposed to speak well of the humble help that I bring, if I bring any. But, Héloïse, he said, let us not forget the subject of this talk, that outside of the priesthood there is no advancement for a layman. Which wouldst thou prefer, for me to be renowned among men or to be thy faithful lover always? I would prefer thee to be great, for then I could watch and rejoice in thy triumphs. Thou art my triumph, which is not unnatural since I am a woman, a satellite. It is hard for me to believe that thou wouldst sacrifice thy love for a vanity, he answered. There would be no sacrifice, since my desire is to hear thee well spoken of in the world, she said. And would that be enough? Abélard asked; to live contented apart, hearing of my triumphs? And if there were no triumphs, wouldst thou cease to love me? Abélard, I cannot think of thee apart from triumphs. Thou hast given more thought to thy love than I have given to mine, he replied. The words: there is no advancement for a layman

outside of the Church, may have been spoken by me, but if so they were spoken without application of them to myself. They were treasured up in my mind, and used to mould thy love of me, to shape it to an idea, that the man must be glorious for a woman to love him. But love is an end in itself and not a means to an end. Thy learning was but a condiment. I should have loved thee though I had found thee in ignorance of Virgil, Tibullus, Ovid, and the residue. I know not why I loved, nor how I loved, but abandoned myself to it, content that much might be well lost if one thing were won, thereby gaining reproof from thee, who said that my present lessons are but repetitions of former lessons. Thou makest the most of the argument, for argument is thy business and thy genius, Héloïse answered, but my heart tells me that I am right, that I am the lover and not thou. With the skill of the great dialectician thou wouldst have it that thy honour and glory are but the selfish ends that I seek. So our life may be argued about, for it is or may be but a passing phase of another life. Every moment of our lives, Abélard answered, is but a passing phase. We do but cheat each other, Héloïse returned; and as is common to a man, thou must lay the burden on me, for thou knowest well in thy heart, as I know in mine, that in giving thee to the priesthood I only give part of thee. Our separation need not be for long; a year at most. Wilt thou wait here for me in content, counting the days till I return to thee? And how soon after my ordination may I return to thee? Why not at once, Abélard? At once, Héloïse? Are priests not as other men? she said. Nature made man for woman and woman for man; Nature abides, dogmas and doctrines come and go. Thy words come to thee easily, Héloïse, as easily as tinkling from the bell. It is hard for me to associate thy words with thee, for what art thou but a child? But thou art always thyself, just as the bell is itself always. None taught thee to think. Thy thoughts do not rise out of books, but are natural to thee, and that is why they seem so wonderful to me, who have learnt to think out of books. A courageous nature is thine without alloy, speaking always out of itself. Héloïse, I shall always love thee, for thou art myself, an Abélard that might have been. Only in philosophy

are we divided, for thou hast little taste for philosophy, yet thou wouldst have me a philosopher. To be a philosopher thou must be a priest, she replied. A priest, he answered; the words sound like a knell in my ear. I ask thee, she said, to be a priest, Abélard, so that I may retain my love always, it being all that I have in the world. Let it be so, Héloïse; a priest I will be, and will begin to-morrow to inquire out how my ordination shall be accomplished. To-morrow! Héloïse cried. See, thou art frightened already, he answered. No, I am not frightened, but I would not have thee leave me till thou hast been my lover wholly to the very end. I will come to thy couch to-night, Abélard, she said; and two hours later he was waiting for her, and she came into his room and lay down beside him, her face telling him that she had been weeping and had washed her tears away. They began afresh, and she clasped him voluptuously yet in sorrow, saying: dear, I am to lose thee, and so refuse all partial love from thee. But if thou shouldst find thyself in child? If that should be my fortune, she answered, I will bear it without complaint, for he will be thy child, and the suffering he will bring me of the flesh, and the shame, will help me to endure the sorrow of our separation. And this night, this night, thou shalt not break away from me, and thy seed shall flourish in me if God wills it so. I will have thee, Abélard, wholly, altogether, for I was born for thee and thou for me, with God's forbearance and perchance his blessing. Before I yield myself I must have thy promise that our love shall be complete. Let me find God's blessing in it, he said. She gave her mouth, and they lay a long while in each other's arms, to lie again and again possessed of love of one another. Only now do we belong to each other, she said, all that went before was nothing. We have answered Nature's bidding, he answered her, and it is as thou sayest, there is but one mutuality in Nature's law, and as thou sayest, all that went before was nothing. But now that what had to be has been, we must be careful of our secret, for enemies are about, and until the Canon leaves the house we may not kiss. But we may sit together, she said, with books before us.

And so the books were always open, and their eyes bent

upon them when Fulbert came into the room. The sight of so much learning pleased him, and he left the room abruptly, afraid to stay longer, his presence proving an interruption in their studies. But once Fulbert returning suddenly to say something he had forgotten, Abélard seized the birch that hung upon the wall, saying: that passage thou hast translated many times always with the same faults. What! What! cried Fulbert, deceived. Always the same faults, said Abélard, and to continue in our faults deserves punishment; whereupon he struck Héloïse twice across her hands. But it were better to strike thee than that Fulbert should suspect us, and the greater hurt, he said, was in my heart, and the heart suffers more than the hands. He kissed her hands and her eyes, and hearing the front door close he took her in his arms. So, Abélard, no woman has pleased thee till I did? and he answered her that till he met her, music and philosophy had claimed him so fully that he had had no thought for life till now. From that day their passion for each other took new forms and refinements; to none did he find her loath. Yet there was a shadow on her happiness, for their desire of one another became so importunate that Abélard could not leave her to go to his school, and she watched the shadow darkening in his face and heard him say that the thought of his school was distasteful, and that he could not overcome his dislike of these lessons.

But thy lessons are thyself, Abélard, she answered, and thou wilt return to me with pleasure, excited by the separation. Have I not earned a holiday? he replied; and art not thou my holiday, Héloïse? But if thou wish it, I will leave thee; and to soothe the pain his words caused, he said: thou art right, I must go, and thine absence will increase my pleasure in seeing thee again. And when he returned and she said: didst speak with inspiration? he answered: no. I unrolled the scroll of memory and repeated the old lessons. But on my way hither, verses came into my head without being asked: love songs that are thou, songs that are I. Then sing to me, she said, picking the lute from the wall. She was the first to hear songs that would capture town after town, delighting all by the charm of the verses and the tunes that accompanied them

—all except the disciples, who said in the school: music and poetry have captured our master; he is no longer a philosopher, but a trouvère. And Abélard, noticing his own estrangement from his scholars and disciples, began to think of his own honour and how he might escape from the false and painful position he found himself in, asking himself with what words he would answer Fulbert if the Canon were to surprise them one day in each other's arms, or if the Canon were to give ear to the gossips who were already busy with their names. It is true, he said, that a man is blind to the evil within his doors and goes his way unaware of the vices of his children and his wife, the laughing-stock of the crowd. But what is known to all sooner or later cannot be hidden from the victim whom it most concerns, and one day Fulbert opened the door with a suddenness, almost a violence, that was unusual, and the lovers were afraid, for it seemed certain that the news of their love had reached his ears. Neither doubted that it was so when he said: Héloïse, I would speak to Abélard alone. I have some orders to give to Madelon, she answered, and left the room, assuming an air of indifference that was not lost upon Abélard.

Abélard, said Fulbert, the common talk about the Cathedral and in the town has been for some time that my niece is your mistress, but these lies have only just come to my ears, and I told him who brought them to me that he had been listening to liars. I am not mistaken in you? No, sir; you're not mistaken, Abélard answered. Your niece is no more to me than a favourite pupil, which is as it should be, for I have never met such intelligence before as hers, and—— Nothing of what is said is true, Abélard? Fulbert interjected. Nothing, sir. At his words the gloom lifted from the Canon's face, and his voice became lighter. It was my duty to tell what is in every mouth, and it is my duty to tell her, too, though it would have been better that such stories did not reach her ears yet. They reach the ears of all sooner or later. But say once more, Abélard, it is not true. I put my faith in you. Our relations have always been what they should be, sir: those of an affectionate pupil to a devoted master. Give me your hand, Abélard. And holding the door, he called to Héloïse:

Héloïse, come to me. Abélard's heart seemed to stop beating and he felt the colour die out of his face, for if Héloïse were to admit the truth—his thoughts did not carry him further than a vague sense of horror and shame—yes, uncle, I am coming. He heard her feet on the stairs, and a moment later she was in the room. My dear child, I have come to tell you of the wickedness that is being spoken in Paris to-day, about the Cathedral, and in the street corners and in the taverns; it is said everywhere that you are Abélard's mistress. How did you answer the scandal-mongers? Héloïse asked, with an unchanging countenance. I answered them that they were liars, the Canon replied. He had intended to lay a trap for Héloïse so that he might get the truth, but the words revealed to Héloïse the knowledge that Abélard had denied the truth, and she answered: uncle, you did well to tell them they were liars. I am sorry there are people who would speak ill of a girl who has done them no harm. She has saved me, Abélard said to himself, and the Canon took his niece into his arms and kissed her. My heart told me it was not so. I did not suspect thee, dear, but hearing that such talk was about I had to come to you both; but you have lifted a great weight from me, and he turned aside to disguise his emotion. And when he thought he could speak without faltering, he said: it will be well, despite your innocence, that Abélard leave my house. Oh, uncle, Héloïse cried, must I lose my friend, my first friend, my only friend, because people speak evil? It is hard, Héloïse, but I do not see how Abélard can remain here. What do you say, Abélard? And Abélard answered: it will be better for me to withdraw. I shall lose a dear pupil, but, Héloïse, your uncle is right, I must leave, and now.

Héloïse turned to the window and picked up a book: never shall we read Virgil together again, and the Canon answered: now I will leave you; Abélard will tell thee that it is as I say, and he will be able to make plain better than I that his absence is necessary if an end is to be put to this evil talk.

They waited for the door to close, but when it closed Abélard did not take Héloïse in his arms for shame of the breaking of the trust that had been imposed upon him. But Héloïse, knowing only love, was thinking wildly of how the

days would pass apart from Abélard. It is hard that we should be divided just as we have become used to each other's thoughts and ways, and each needful to the other, she said; when thou art with me life is full, and when thou art away, empty as a desert. It cannot be, Abélard, that we shall not sit in that window-seat again arranging plans, plans in which I had a share; didst thou not say that I could help thee, and will it be that somebody else takes my place? Abélard did not answer, and they stood each a melancholy gazing-stock for the other. We must wait until the scandal dies, he said at last; now I must go. But why shouldst thou be the first to say: I must go? she cried. Do not make the parting worse than it is, Héloïse, he answered. Wouldst then that we should part, she replied, as if the parting were but a welcome diversion in our life? Héloïse, the strain is too great, I cannot bear it; my tears will flow if I strive to endure it longer. Only this I have strength to say, that this parting cannot be for long; for those who love as we do cannot be parted. We shall always be united in thought, and thought is a great magnet, Héloïse. I have often spoken to thee of reason, now I speak to thee of faith; good-bye.

CHAP. XIV.

IT might have been better that we had confessed the truth, he said, as he sat alone in his old lodging, dreaming of Héloïse, unable to sleep, his mind torn by thoughts of his love and his duty towards Fulbert. Everything seemed crooked, and life was a greater load than he could bear, but he would have to bear it. The night went by and the dawn came, and he said: I shall have to prepare a lesson to-day and another lesson to-morrow whilst Héloïse is—— His thoughts died, and soon after, or long after, he awoke, asking himself of what he had been thinking—his long absence—and then he fell to thinking of the last lesson he had given in the cloister, for it would not do to repeat what he had said a few days before: he must repeat something he had not said for many months. But he could only think of Héloïse, and suddenly the thought came

upon him of the words she had used and the act that had followed. Her words were: I will have no partial love from thee, the risk is mine; and he fell to thinking how the Canon had burst in upon them, the questions he had put to them, and their denials. And while recalling those last moments in the rue des Chantres, he remembered that he had had no thought in the few minutes left them to take leave of each other to ask her to send him a message saying: the danger is past. Now if it should befall him to have gotten Héloïse with child, how would he help her, what would be the next step? A fortnight went by in fitful anxiety, and as the next week brought no news of her he welcomed the letter that Madelon brought to him, certain that it contained the good news. While reading it he became aware suddenly that Madelon's eyes were upon him. She may be reading my face, he said to himself, and it might be well to cast the letter aside carelessly and so deceive her. He was about to do this when he read a few lines lower down: Madelon knows all and can be trusted. So the contents of this letter are not unknown to thee? he said, raising his eyes and looking her straight in the face. Héloïse tells me that we can trust thee. I hope indeed that I can be trusted to do all that I can to help her in her woman's trouble. Poor damosel, whom I knew in her cradle and who has been ever since in my care, more or less. All the years she was at school at Argenteuil, I never let one pass without going to see her and bringing her cakes and fruit, and that is ever since her father was killed in Jerusalem after finding the spear that pierced good Jesus's side. It is said that the spear is coming back—— But, my good Madelon, we have to think how we have to save the good damosel. Yes, indeed we have, interrupted Madelon. For when the news reaches the Canon's ears he will be beside himself, tearing at his hair and talking all kinds of wicked things of how he must be revenged upon you, good sir, and going out of his mind perhaps and drowning himself in the river, for the store that he puts on that child is more than anyone can tell. And what wilt thou be saying—what, Madelon? Of course I shall be saying whatever comes into my head—that none need know about the baby, and that everybody has babies, and it is the

fault of nobody, for it is in the nature of things that the little lambs shall skip. Should I be far amiss in saying these things, sir? Thou hast thine own words and ways of saying things, Madelon. But our damosel asks me what she is to do, and I would know what thou hast said, and what advice given? I have told her, Madelon replied, that there is nothing for it but for us three to take the road to Brittany, for are we not all Bretons together, and coming from within a few miles of the same part? We three should take the road together, for the ride through the Orléans forest is a long one and full of danger in winter, the wolves being hungrier in the snow than in the sunshine. So if she is not to be frightened out of her wits with fear that the Canon should suspect anything, as well he might, for there are women that show the child in four months just as there are women who don't show it until the eighth—I was like that myself, standing behind the tables so that the Canon shouldn't see my belly, and should be loath that our little damosel should be put to the same strain as I was. The ride is a long one, and she is better able to bear it now than she will be in six months' time. The floods in the Loire sweep the country in winter, picking up trees and steads as easily as wolves do lambs, even whole towns. Do I not know the Loire, having lived by it all my life till—but we won't speak of that again. If we don't start out on our journey now we shall have to ride the most of it, and the leagues are long between Tours and Nantes. It is true that your folk are nearer this way, but it is only a few miles between Nantes and Le Pallet; about ten or a dozen I am reckoning it. No more is it than that. So we may count it from Paris to Nantes a matter of three or four hundred leagues or thereabouts. Three weeks' jogging on a packhorse is neither good for a woman in the family way nor the baby. So methinks Héloïse cannot do better than to start at once, she and I together, for she will never find her way there alone. Nor would you, though I put much faith in thee, Madelon, Abélard said, faith in thy courage and truthfulness and common-sense to help you out of the difficulties you would meet on the way. But I must go with you, and we must start at once. Not at once, said Madelon, but in a week from now.

Why is that? asked Abélard. The Canon is going away to Soissons for a few days, Madelon replied, and won't he be in a tantrum when he finds his niece, and with her his old servant, who has looked after him all her life, gone. But we will leave a letter for him telling the truth, for we might as well all three murder him as not to do this, for it would be the same thing. We will leave a letter, Abélard replied. And when does the Canon leave for Soissons? The first day of next week, on a Monday. On Tuesday morning I shall be waiting for you by the Little Bridge with the hackneys at daybreak, for none must know of our departure. I will come in a friar's garb, and between this and then thou canst fit, cut and sew a nun's habit for Héloïse; and thou must wear a habit. Two nuns and a friar we shall be riding towards Orléans on Tuesday morning. So be it, sir, and though I am leaving the Canon, who will be breaking his heart for me and his meals, it will be pleasant to be in charge of our damosel, going with her to our own country, for are we not, as I said before, sir, Bretons together? We are three Bretons, Abélard interjected, and on Tuesday morning we shall be riding towards our country. Thou hast much talk, Madelon, and whilst listening to thee I am thinking as well as listening, and it has come upon me that our ride to Orléans will be a slow one, for although thou hast ridden many a pony over the hills of Brittany, our damosel, as thou callest her, has never been astride, nor yet sat on a pillion. It will be slow indeed, sir, but our damosel being no more than seventeen will learn riding easily, for at that age the limbs are supple and soon fall to any labour that may be set upon them, whether jogging on a pillion or gripping a pony's side with the knees. She will soon fall into it, but let the pony be a quiet one, a slow pony, one loath to move out of his walk. Even a walking pony can do ten miles a day, and the Canon will hear nothing of this for about three or four days, so we shall be in Orléans before he returns to his empty house. I am sorry for the good man, for he has been a good master to me and I am leaving him in a great trouble, and I had always looked to myself to be by his side to console him—— With such words, Abélard interrupted, as God's little lambs will skip. Now thou art

laughing at an old woman and her talk. But isn't it true, sir, and it may well be that if you skipped with her it is because you did but a little skipping in your early days. Sooner or later we all skip, and myself is a token. One foggy night it was, and—— A story that will beguile our ride, Madelon. But now I would have thee return to Héloïse with the good news that if we do three leagues a day, we shall be in Orléans in five days from Tuesday. She will be a bit stiff after the first day but I will give her a hot bath and, as you say it, sir, we may reckon on being in Orléans the next week, not that I am much good at counting, but as an old woman makes it up on her fingers it will be about that. And twenty leagues takes a lot of catching up, and the Canon will not know which road we have taken, nor guess perchance our journey's end.

CHAP. XV.

ON the day appointed Abélard was at the Little Bridge an hour before dawn, watching the stars, wondering how long it would be before they began to pale, rise higher and vanish out of sight. The watchman's voice crying the third hour told him that his hopes would not be fulfilled for yet half-an-hour. He must have dozed in the saddle, for he remembered nothing after the watchman's cry till, rousing his drooping head, he saw the towers of Notre-Dame showing above the murk in which the city lay buried and was inspired to think of the coming day as rising out of the night like a phantom, grey and empty, unreal, almost vindictive; soundless, too, he added; for the owls are back in their tower, the fox has gone to ground; not a chitter in the jasmine; and we shall be far away in the country before the daws come out of the hollow boles.

But why am I astride of the mare, wearying her with my weight? he asked, and dismounting, he stood in admiration of the strength of his young chestnut mare: well worth the money I paid for her, he said, five or six years old, of great girth and up to almost any weight. Then his eyes falling on the tufty fetlocks, he remarked: how short she is from

the fetlock to the knee, with chest and shoulders like a bull; a pretty head, a winning countenance starred white. He liked to hear her whinny when he approached with the nose-bag, and to see her fling it from side to side in her greediness when it was strapped behind her ears. A good feeder, he said; a little long in the body, but finer quarters and hocks would be sought for in vain. His eyes turned to the two grey hackneys, and he saw in them good roadsters, sound in wind and limb, who will, he said, take us to Orléans without a breakdown. We needn't press them, for Héloïse will not be able to ride more than four leagues a day; Madelon, perhaps, for she was used to riding in her childhood. Four leagues the first day, three the second; on the third we shall have to rest longer. After that, riding will come easier to Héloïse.

The horses continued to feed, and when the watchman cried the fourth hour Abélard looked across the bridge into the dusk, and seeing two figures in black hurrying towards him he began to unbuckle the nose-straps. Are we late? said Madelon. I was here before daybreak, Abélard replied, and that was about three-quarters of an hour ago, maybe an hour, but the horses are now baited and ready for the long march that lies before us. As he spoke these words, he overlooked his travelling companions, admiring their garb, the long Benedictine habits that would allow them to pass for nuns; himself in the surcoat and hat he wore would be taken for a friar—a friar conducting two nuns from convent to convent we shall be to all eyes. I will pull up the girths a hole tighter, he said, turning to Héloïse, for I do not want thee to find thyself under the horse's belly. Find myself under the horse's belly! Héloïse cried. Master Abélard, such talk is likely to frighten one who has never been on a horse, as you should well know, and Abélard answered Madelon that he had spoken thoughtlessly (indulging himself in a joke), for there was no danger of such a thing coming to pass. For, you see, he said, turning to Héloïse, the pillion is attached by a strap going under the horse's tail and by another strap round his neck. And the talk turning on the greater fatigue it was to a horse to carry a woman sitting sideways than to carry one astride, it be-

hoved Madelon to speak of her habit to ride astride. But thou art a nun for the time being, Madelon, and the religious should never be seen astride; it is not befitting them, who are taught to keep their legs always in one stocking. Come, let me lift thee on to the pillion and strap thee into it, Héloïse. Hoist Madelon first, she said. Madelon caught at the bridle like one who knew how to use it, and Abélard turned to Héloïse, who quivered with the wind or with alarm, she knew not which, asking why the horse whinnied, and why he laid back his ears. Now if he should run away, what am I to do? He told her that that was not possible. For thou'lt ride between us, and there will be two leading reins on thy bridle; one will be in my hand, the other in Madelon's, and little by little thou'lt learn how to turn the horse to the left or to the right, to rein him in and to urge him forward. But I am foretelling the fortunes that await thee a week hence. Be not afraid, and of all believe that I did not bring thee out of Paris to lose a life that I hold more precious than mine own. His words heartened her; and she felt that she could confide herself in all such things to Abélard, but even so, it was hard to be calm, for if the horse did not put back his ears he whinnied; a rabbit darting suddenly across the path awoke him from his dream, and uttering what seemed to Héloïse like a frightful snort, he jostled to the right, once almost overthrowing the horse that Madelon rode. He chooses to bump Madelon's horse, Héloïse said, because he is smaller and thinks he can overthrow him; he never bumps to the left, for thy horse is too big to be upset, and he looks upon every heap of stones as an enemy. Abélard answered that it might be well for her to change horses with Madelon, for a stumbling horse is tiresome to ride. But he wished to get away from Paris quickly, so nothing more was said about changing horses; and the little cavalcade rode on in silence, the world unfolding field after field unperceived, Abélard's eyes being always on Héloïse's horse, watchful lest the awkward animal should trip and unseat her, and it was not till the first timid ray struck across the roadway, revealing in its passage some budding larches at the corner of the brown wood, that his eyes were diverted from his charge to their spires, whose traceries,

he said, show delicate as the groined roofs of the new cathedrals—his meaning not being plain to Héloïse till an hour after, when an old Romanesque church, lying low, almost squat, served him for an illustration, and he made it plain to her that the round arch was superseded by the pointed; for it allowed the builders to build higher, to raise their roofs to over a hundred feet, thereby inspiring the worshippers to lift their thoughts as well as their hearts Godward. The Romanesque church represents faith, he said, and the new church faith enforced by reason, a little exordium that filled Héloïse's eyes with wonder and her heart with reverence, though she would have wished to hear of faith and reason at some more suitable time, for at that moment the green streak of morning was passing away and rose-coloured clouds were beginning in the sky. A lovely day is preparing, she said, and the trouvère getting the better of the philosopher he forgot faith and reason, and said: the beauty of the larches is enough. But his apology was not to her taste, for she felt that any concession from him was out of keeping, and answered that it was reason, not faith, that helped men to an appreciation of the spring for itself. She put it to him, asking if it were not true that if we fail to turn to reason each spring-tide must seem like a separate act of God. Her words were pleasing to him. I will not deny that the words Faith and Reason exalt me, he answered, for they represent a battle that is in progress between the Church and human nature, but I am often afraid that when I meet people they will say: ah, he will talk to us now about faith and reason, and instead of speaking about what is nearest my heart, I speak of other things, for though no one would believe it, I am at heart a shy man.

As in a bird, the spring awakens the singer in thee, Hèloïse said; and I have thee always in mind going forth with the great Comte de Rodebœuf on horses, attended by gleemen. A merry picture that spring morning summons, Rodebœuf and thyself riding from castle to castle, watching the trees coming into flower and leaf; first it was the larch, he's always one of the earliest; see, the hedges are blossoming on this side of the path, but on the other side they are not so

far advanced. The trouvères, he said, love the spring, and the flowers and the birds owe much to us, for we know all their calls and feathers, petals and leaves; we have them all by rote, birds and flowers; our hearts are uplifted when we see the white glint of the chaffinch's wings; and we stop to admire the handsome little bird when he comes down to the runnel to drink; and our eyes are ever on the watch for the flowers as they arise in the hedge bottom, after the long, dark winter. Our thoughts arise, too, like the flowers; like them we come out of a dark winter and we think of it when we catch sight of the purple of the ragged-robin in the wood. Flowers and birds owe much to us, for without us they would be nameless, except to peasants; everybody knows the violets, oxslips and primroses, but only the trouvères have eyes for the stitchwort, jack-in-the-green, country wench and ladies' smocks. He did not know the names of the flowers in Latin, and the French names gained Madelon's attention. How is it, she asked, that with all the learning that ye have in abundance, ye were short of the Latin and had to speak French when talking of the country-side? Because French is the language of our roadsides, I'll warrant neither one nor the other can put the Latin name on chaffinch, and maybe the name of the wren is not known to you, and if it be known it's only because it chimes with other words that it is your craft to put into your songs. Put a name, philosopher, on the tree we see at the corner of yon wood coming into yellow. Madelon, Madelon, thou must not speak to Pierre Abélard as the philosopher, though he be a philosopher, Héloïse cried. But why should I not take a lesson from her in the things she knows better than I? Abélard interposed. Thou askest what is the yellow tree at the corner of yon wood; a fair question, and to my shame, Madelon, I cannot put a name on it in French, nor yet in Latin. It may be that at closer view, she said—— But no, Madelon, neither at closer nor at distant view, Abélard answered, can I tell it. A sycamore it is, said Madelon, and a yellower tree there is not in all the springtime, which the trouvères call the green springtime. But the spring is not green, but yellow. Tell me if yon birch be green or yellow; near by is an aspen deeper in

colour than the birch; both are yellow. Let your eyes run along the roadside and tell me if the crown of the King of France is brighter yellow than the gorse. Those who sing about the springtime have no eyes for its birds or flowers or trees, except as matter for rhymes. I'd have it from you, which is the poet, he that loves the woodland for itself, or he that makes rhymes out of it? The rhymester gets the credit, though there isn't one among you all who knows that every tree has flowers, except, perhaps, the fig. Does the oak bear flowers? Héloïse asked, and Madelon answered that if she were to look into all the greenish chains she would find flowers; and at the word greenish, Abélard said: I think we heard the word greenish, Madelon. Whereupon Madelon replied tartly that she had not denied that there was green in the springtime. Green there is but not much. The corn is green in the spring; the buttercups hide the grass, and the meadow over yonder, she said, is almost as golden as the gorse; and I would have you tell me why all poets speak of the springtime as green. She waited for Abélard and for Héloïse to answer her, but got no answer from them.

Though misfortunes may betide us, Héloïse, said Abélard, at the end of a long silence, we shall not forget this happy morning. We shall not forget it, Abélard, Héloïse answered, and storing it among their memories, they rode through a pleasant undulating country, now all white with bloom from pear and cherry trees, breaking the silence rarely, very often riding a quarter of a league, perhaps even more, without speaking, Abélard pondering what his life would be when he returned to Paris, Héloïse, whose eyes were rarely off him, wondering what his thoughts might be, so absorbed was he in his thoughts, as well he might be, for he had begun to ask himself if Fulbert, after the rape of his niece, would tolerate his (Abélard's) authority in the schools and if he would not seek means to bring about his overthrow. While thinking these things his eyes often went to Madelon, who rode without noticing the country they were riding through, sitting on her pillion, he said to himself, forgetful of the fields that are green and the fields that are yellow, thinking only that Fulbert had always been a good master to her and that

she liked to do her duty towards him. But she had betrayed him. She is thinking, he added, of Fulbert returning to his house, wandering from empty room to empty room, his eyes at last catching sight of the letter they left for him. Madelon's thoughtfulness at last claimed Héloïse's attention, and she, too, fell to thinking of her uncle, her picture of him bringing into her face a pensiveness that forced Abélard into further talk about birds and flowers. Listen, he said, to those three birds in a cherry-tree, all singing together. But I would know the names of the birds, she replied; canst thou tell them to me? The bird with a flash of white in his wings is a chaffinch, Abélard answered, but I don't like his song; he has wearied us with it, for he and his fellows have never ceased to utter it since we left the Little Bridge, trolling it out in every fir, a wearisome run of notes ending on a defiant little flourish; over and over again he repeats it. I have forgotten the Latin name of the bluish bird, a stocky little fellow with a harsh cry, but lean thy head to me and I will whisper it in French. She bent her head over, and in a kiss Abélard whispered: titmouse. And the bird whose note is single? she asked. He whispered: greenfinch.

Sometimes a hundred or two hundred feet passed under the horses' hooves without a word being exchanged, and these silences were not less sweet than speech, for each enshrined the other in thought and worshipped before the image. The last silence was the longest, and it was not broken until the horses entered a rooky wood, tall boles rising fifty or sixty feet from the roadway, the nests in the high branches, and a great clamour about them. The wayfarers stopped to admire the parent rook crawling gingerly into the nest with some snail or grub for the squeakers within it. There is even a young rook or two on the edge of the nests; a precocious season truly, he continued, pointing to a fledgeling that had ventured far out along a branch. And what are the rooks saying to him, since thou knowest them so well, Abélard? They are telling him that he must return to the nest till his wings are stronger if he would not fall to the ground and become a prey to prowling cats and foxes. At that moment the droppings of the rooks becoming more numerous, Madelon

cried: I will not wait here to be covered with filth, and she struck her horse with her heels, bringing the other horses after her. The next thing they saw were some lambs skipping up the banks and butting each other, as glad to be alive, Héloïse said, as the lambs were when thou and Rodebœuf set forth on an April morning many years ago. I remember those lambs of old time, Abélard replied, and the clamorous rookery in the trees over the castle gates. On that day even the sheep joined the lambs at play, but now they are feeding more industriously, for the grass is not as forward as it should be, despite the warm rains we have had. The lambs can afford to play, for they feed from the udders; and at that moment a lamb's belly gave him warning that hunger was nigh upon him, and leaving his mates he galloped to his dam, thrusting his nozzle against the full udder as if he would drink it dry in a draught. How patient the yoe is with him, for he is her own; but were another lamb to come she would drive him away. It is all very wonderful, Héloïse said, and putting aside thoughts of germination, she said: a wonderful day that was when you two went forth and gave a display of singing in the castle of—I cannot remember the name—and before Abélard could tell her the name, her thoughts had gone back to Virgil. But all we see to-day Virgil saw more than a thousand years ago; and the *Georgics* rising up in their minds, each tried to outdo the other in quotations, saying: match that if thou canst, till at last Abélard said: if the *Georgics* were lost we could recover them all from our memories, for where mine failed thou wouldst come to my aid, and together we could give back to the world the book it had lost.

Madelon, how is it, he said, that thou findest no joy in the springtime? The birds do not seem to delight thine ears, nor the skipping lambs thine eyes, and the yellow meadows pass by without stirring thee into speech, except to say the trouvères speak of the green meadows whereas they would speak of the yellow if they had eyes about them. Having no language but French, said Madelon, and being no rhymester in it, I have no thought for the buttercups in which the cattle are standing knee-deep, except that the fences seem

weak and hardly able to keep the sheep on the bare fields. And why wouldst thou keep them on bare fields? Héloïse asked.. For the sake of their own precious lives, for were they to get in among the meadows full of vetches they would swell with wind and die if none were ready with lancets to relieve them. And is it not as well to think of such things as to stand under a rookery listening to all the squeakings and squawkings up in the branches, and getting your eyes filled with filth for your pains? You think that I have not been watching you and guessing a great part of your talk, though it was in a foreign language; making a genius of the little chaffinch, who rattles through a dozen little chitterings ending up with a kweek-kweek. Neither chaffinch nor rook is worth a fine spring lettuce made tasty with oil and vinegar and hard-boiled eggs and beetroot; nor is the song of any blackbird or thrush equal to spring spinach or asparagus; nor would either of you be listening to a lark if a dish of asparagus were waiting. No more than Madelon would herself. But do not think that I am without thoughts for the early cauliflowers. I love the spring as well as any gleeman or gleemaiden living, but I love the spring in a more natural way, for they love it only for their rhymes, whereas, being a cook, I love it for my belly and for other bellies. Now is there anything more natural than the belly? For all that crawls and swims and flies and walks on two feet or on four has a belly; we are bred in the belly and we live by our bellies; no sooner is the lamb out of the yoe's belly than he's up against the udder, which is part of her belly; and we are as dependent upon the lamb as the lamb is upon the yoe, for we, too, have bellies to fill and the lamb fills them excellently well, and never better than in the month of April, above all other months the month for lambs. For though I would not disdain a lamb in the month of March, an April lamb is sweeter, but leave the lamb till June and July and you'll be eating what is neither lamb nor sheep; even May is a bit late for the lamb, for while you have been praising green leaves that serve no purpose whatever, especially those of the beech and the oak, for even the goat, that is a hardy feeder, likes them not, I have been thinking that the lambs

we saw a while ago should be on the spit before another month, else the flavour of the meat will be lost. I know well enough that all I am saying seems hard to the poet, who goes about with his nose in the air, sniffing the hawthorn breeze and putting rhymes to it, and I will tell our philosopher poet who is taking us back to his country, which is our country (for if not altogether a Breton, thou'rt half a one, Héloïse), that the finest eating I have ever known, and I have known some good eating in my time, was a lamb that had lost his yoe. She was taken by a wolf, and he'd have died, too, before the next wolf would have taken him, for he was near gone before I brought him into the house and put him in a basket and fed him; he used to put his nozzle into my hand and follow me about everywhere, but Lord! if we were to give away to those feelings, we would be worse than the village idiot, for the lamb the yoe nourishes was given to us to eat. Did not the Lord himself say to Peter: kill, and eat? and Abélard, who knows the Bible better than any man alive, maybe as well as the Pope of Rome himself, will tell us what part of the Bible the three words come from. The words thou hast in mind come from the Acts of the Apostles, Madelon, and I will go with thee thus far, though I could not cut the throat of a lamb that I had brought up in a basket by the fireside and that thrust his nozzle into my hand and followed me about. But if you'd nobody to cut it for you, you'd cut it fast enough yourself, Master Abélard, for you wouldn't eat him alive, would you? Madelon asked; and if we didn't eat him, and left him to multiply his kind there would be no lambs, for we would have so many lambs that there would be nothing left for us to eat, and we'd be calling the wolves to rid us of the pests. Now, aren't I right? said Madelon; come now, you two who are disposed to laugh at poor Madelon who knows no Latin, deny it if you can that she speaks the truth on this morning better than you do yourselves.

But, Madelon, said Abélard, though we should grant that the lamb is no service to man if he be not eaten, thou'lt not have it for thy whole creed that we have not ears and eyes and nostrils wherewith to take out our pleasure. The song

of the thrush on the branch, and the song of the lark as he flies heavenward, the fluting of the blackbird in the orchard, and the robin's dainty ditty from the topmost spray of the coral hedge are voices that we would be loath to be without. But these voices are not the only voices the spring brings us, Madelon interrupted; in the spring the peacock squalls till you'd think he'd bring down the vault of heaven. It's true that the spring gives back to the seas the sea-birds, that scream all the winter up and down the Seine. And what is all this squeaking and screaming about? Nothing whatever, for the birds don't understand each other. How canst thou say that the birds don't understand each other? Abélard asked. The crow talks, and the parrot too. I've heard of talking birds, she answered, and know not if they can say all the words that are reported of them, but am full sure that the words they learn from us are roted in them without meaning, just like their own cries. The rook whose caw pleased you a while ago is hardly a better bird under the pasty than the crow that nobody eats. The pigeon is better if he be laid out between slices of good beef, for the neighbourhood of the beef favours him, and the slices of fat bacon with which whoever knows the pigeon overlays him help him a lot, and the hard-boiled egg helps him, too, and we've begun to forgive him his monotonous coo, coo, coo, when—— But Jesus, Mary and Joseph! listen for the life of you, for the bird that has just flown from the rail yonder, flapping like a rook across the fields, is the noisiest bird that spring brings us; from overseas he comes. Hark. And reining in their horses, they heard: cuc-koo, cuc-koo, cuc-koo, repeated from every hillside. No need to wait much longer; we shall have heard enough of them two notes before we get to Brittany, Madelon said, her heels striking her horse into a trot.

Before the travellers had ridden another league the cry began to strike tediously on the ear, and to forget it Abélard and Héloïse were glad to listen to Madelon, who, nothing loath, continued her patter, asking them, or asking herself, it was not clear which, how it could be that a Christian man should bear with that tiresome bird, his ears cocked at the beginning of the noisy month for his cry, and making

it his brag that whereas the neighbour heard cuc-koo on the fifteenth, it was his luck to hear it on the twelfth. Now, she said, the Latin poet of whom you're always talking, Virgil, did he ever speak of the cuckoo? As neither Héloïse nor Abélard was able to say that he did, Madelon took advantage of their lack of knowledge to declare her belief that the bird had come into favour with the trouvères, for like them he is a wanderer without a home of his own or wit to build one, or too lazy to try, we know not which; the hen just laying an egg on the ground and carrying it about in her bill till a sparrow's nest is spied in the hedge, or a lark's nest or a wagtail's. One is as good as another, for the cuckoo leaves her egg and her offspring. A knowing bird, I will say that for the cuckoo, for she lays but one egg, whereas if she were to lay two, neither the hedge-sparrow nor the wagtail nor the lark would be able to feed the young one; a voracious bird is the young cuckoo, that turns the natural chicks out of the nest so that he may get all the food that the parents can collect; and Lord! it's said that the two sparrows, the cock and the hen, work so hard to feed the ungainly fowl they have hatched that they never get through the winter but drop off at the first touch of frost, having no strength left in them to fight against hard times. Nor is it strange that I should have no liking for them birds, for it was one of them birds that dropped his egg in me and left me to feed the chick all the days of my life, poor little hedge-sparrow that I am. The story that was on thy lips to relate when thou camest to my lodging to tell of Héloïse's trouble is again almost on thy lips, said Abélard, and he waited for Madelon to begin; but she kept a stubborn silence, as if she were sorry for having said so much. Héloïse knows the story well enough, she remarked suddenly, and to encourage her to tell it, Abélard asked her how long it was since she had seen her boy's father.

A week come Tuesday, she answered. So he is still in Paris? Abélard replied. Yes. And the boy? Abélard asked. The boy is in Brittany, he is indeed, and in troth my heart is the lighter for the hope of seeing his bonny face again. Madelon doesn't make the fuss that you do about green fields

and the songs of birds. Her spring-tide is in the west yonder, she said. But does the father do nothing for his son? Abélard asked. His son! Madelon answered; he has never owned the boy, though I had him brought to Paris to show him to his father when he was ten; and anybody could see that he was his son, the very spit of him, but he would have none of it. An evil soul must be in him, Abélard said, to deny his son. I could always see that he didn't believe me. But he must know whether he lay with thee or didn't, Abélard interjected. Ah, that's just what he doesn't know. Doesn't know whether he lay with thee? It has often seemed strange, Madelon answered, that he should have doubts about such a thing, and the only way I can make it plain to you—— Is by telling us how a woman may lie with a man unbeknown to him. Well, there isn't much of a story, but just this, she said. We'd been keeping company for a couple of years, or more maybe, when one evening returning home along the river we walked into a fog and lost our way, and he said: Madelon, we may be going towards Nantes or we may be going away from it and it would be better for us to sit down and wait till the fog lifts a bit. We hadn't been sitting there very long before we saw somebody coming through the fog and we called to him; and when he came to us he looked us in the face and said: aren't you the twain that asked me in the morning the way to an inn? And I said: yes, we did ask the way to an inn in the morning, and had our dinner in it, and ever since have been walking about talking over the years to come, for we are going to be married. Going to be married? he said. In about six months, said I, when Jean comes into the farm that his parents have been promising him this many a day, for they are too old to work it. So the man before us said: you will never be working the farm if you sit on in this fog till it lifts, for there will be no lifting of it till the wind changes, and that will not be till daybreak, if then; the fogs lie heavy and long by the river. Well then, what shall we do? we said, and he answered: a wedded couple like you, for you are as good as wedded, shall never sit out in a fog whilst I have a roof over my head. So we went into the man's house, and not to make a fool of myself before them all, I

said: as we'll be wedded in six months we may as well be bedded this night. And the man of the house said: well, you can do that, and if I had a sword I would give it to you so that you might lie on either side of it, which is the token that the twain kept their virtue in the old stories; but I have nothing better than a broomstick, but if that will serve, you can have it. We just laughed at him, for he was a comical fellow. And it was some two months after that night that I went to Jean and said: I am quick. And he said: by whom? So I said: by whom could it be but by thyself? And he said: but I never touched thee the night we lay with a broomstick between us. And I answered him: I know naught of a broomstick. He said: broomstick or none, I never crossed over thee that night, nor any other night, and of all nights that was the one that I couldn't, for I had drunk too much and fell asleep the moment my head was on the pillow, as I remember well. A fine story, a true cuckoo story, said Abélard; and I am minded to hear what answer you made to it. I said: I don't know what you did, but I know what I did, and that more than once. But you talk, Madelon, as if you believed him. Believed him! I know what happened between us, sure enough, but for all that he thinks that he didn't beget his son, for by his manner of talking I can see that he is speaking honest, however strange it may seem to me who knows the truth. And that was the only night that thou hadst knowledge of a man? Troth and faith, the only night; and a great hardship it has been to me, but the boy was worth it, and I don't begrudge any year of labour he has cost me. My heart is light now as the hearts of the birds and the beasts, as your own hearts are light, for I am going to Nantes to see my Jean, who'll be glad to kiss his old mother again. But let's push on, or we shall be old people before we get there, and let there be no more talking.

But they hadn't ridden many minutes before Madelon reined in her horse, and the other horses stopped too, there being leading reins on either side. Now hark to those birds; a dozen if there be one. Tell me if your ears be not wearied of their calling, and wearier would be your bellies if you were to eat him; as well eat a hawk; no good for the spit or

the pot or the pie, a polluter of other birds' nests, a pander, a bawd, and a—— Madelon looked to see if she had listeners.

Do not answer her, Héloïse whispered to Abélard; else her tongue will never cease. It has become as burdensome to me as the bird itself. Talk to me in Latin and I'll answer thee in Latin. I read distress upon thy face, Héloïse, Abélard answered, and guess thy thoughts to be back in the rue des Chantres at the moment when thy uncle returns to the empty house, and, finding no one, runs to my lodging. It is as thou sayest, Abélard, Héloïse replied sadly. While Madelon prattled of the springtime my uncle was plain before me; and I can see him now wandering about the town like one bereft of all reason, talking of indifferent things, only to break off suddenly, remembering that his niece and his servant were taken from him. And that I was the robber, Abélard answered.

CHAP. XVI.

IT was at the end of the third league that Héloïse asked how far they were from the village at which it was arranged they were to rest and bait. Abélard answered her: when the shoulder of yonder hill is passed, thou'lt see it. Her eyes sought the plain vainly for a village. Thine eyes do not see all that's in the plain, for it rises and dips, he said. Thy village is a phantom, an idea of thy brain, she returned, laughing, to keep me on my pillion, which I have kept till now, wishing to please thee. But the lurching stride of my hackney breaks down my will, and as we shall reach Mortemer on foot as easily as on horseback, I pray thee to let me walk. So the last half of the journey was accomplished by Héloïse on foot, holding on to her stirrup, Abélard walking beside her, Madelon leading the way by a few feet. Now is not my promise fulfilled? he said, pointing to a white gable showing through the morning mist. That is Mortemer, not a thousand feet from here, so get thee into thy pillion, for we shall strike a better appearance if we arrive on horseback.

On arriving at the inn she could but fall from her horse into the arms of the innkeeper, so weary was she, and in the inn parlour plead that she was stiff and sore. A tub of hot water will take the stiffness out of thee, said Abélard. And while the water is boiling let us walk about the village, for a change of movement to-day will benefit thee almost as much as the bath, and remember that if the Canon should return suddenly from Soissons he will start in pursuit of us. We shall not be safe till we are sailing down the Loire, she said; and obedient to his every wish, followed him down the village street, too tired to eat, and too tired to sleep until the afternoon of the next day. The next village, Coudray, was but two leagues from Mortemer. We must be in Orléans before Fulbert returns to Paris, was the burden of Abélard's thought as they rode away from Mortemer. At Coudray they passed the night, and to remove all stiffness from Héloïse's limbs she seated herself in another tub of hot water, to which Abélard added a bottle of vinegar; a sovereign remedy, he said. It was even so, and Héloïse, now completely refreshed, mounted her pillion in the belief that she was a perfect horsewoman. May we not trot a little? she asked. Abélard answered: trotting on a pillion is barely possible; a slight amble is the only change of movement that can be attempted, for to trot one has to rise in one's stirrups. If we do not get a boat to take us to Tours we shall throw aside our disguises and ride astride to Blois. And with this promise for encouragement Héloïse sat her hackney, watching the country change from an undulating, pleasant, orchard, garden country into a long, somewhat dismal plain. This plain was once forest, and it would not take many years for it to return to forest, Abélard said. Trees are springing up everywhere; groups of trees and woods, but kept within bounds by man's labour. The words carried their thoughts back to primal Gaul, through which the Druids and their congregations wandered in search of the sacred mistletoe, seeking it where now were large fields of corn many inches high. Pillaged by the ring-doves, Madelon interjected, voracious birds, that the boys armed with rattles can barely drive back into the forest. But I'll say no more to you bird-

lovers, who take pleasure in every kind and sort of bird cry, even that of the worthless cuckoo, a bird that cannot build herself a nest or hatch an egg, but destroys other birds, their eggs at least, and is not herself fit for roasting or boiling, baking or stewing. But I'll say no more, for I can see that neither likes Madelon's talk, but would rather listen to the bagpiping of the larks as they go up and come down. Singing a feverish song, Héloïse said: let us hope that we feel our love deeper than the lark feels his. Abélard asked her if she were tired, if she ached in her joints, and would like to spend more than a night at Étampes. She answered him that it might be better to press on to Orléans, for is it not most true that we shall not be safe till on board a barge sailing down the Loire? But how wonderful it will be to sail down a great river, seeing the towns and villages go by. Thou art tired, Héloïse, almost too tired for speech, but rest awaits thee, for we are close to Étampes. A pleasant town, he continued, telling the town before it came into view; one great street with by-streets straggling in and out of the forest, and the principal street not packed like a Paris street, but each house standing in its own garden.

As they rode into Étampes he asked Héloïse to watch the storied houses and the high-peaked gables filled with picturesque lights and shadows, for they will help thee to forget thine aches, he said. I did not know that a village could be so beautiful, Héloïse answered, as she rode. And riding down the rutted street, and thinking that Étampes wore an air of exaltation and welcome on this fine May afternoon, she snuffed the faint fragrance of the chestnut-trees, now all in flower. Lilac was in bloom in every corner, and laburnum hung golden tassels over every gate. But the best scent of all was the hawthorn, and looking round, they caught sight of the tree hanging over the roadway. A little farther on, hard by the inn whither they were going, a more powerful scent stopped them. Why, sillies, it's nothing but a flowering currant, the strongest of all scents, said Madelon, and her words set them laughing. Madelon, said Abélard, if the country were less known to thee, perhaps thou wouldst appreciate its

beauty more. But here is our inn, and a handsome inn it is, with pink roofs overhung with green branches—Madelon will not deny them some green. Give your horses to the ostlers who come from the archway, and I will help you from your pillions. It would be in keeping with our religious garb to seek a secluded room, but to-morrow we shall be on our way, finding it as best we can through the intricate roads and paths of the forest, so we may indulge ourselves this evening on this terrace overlooking the road. We need a bottle of wine after our long ride, Abélard called back to the innkeeper, and the hour before supper was dreamed under the boughs in Étampes, a forest town, or almost one, not more than ten leagues from Paris. In it Fulbert was forgotten by the lovers, by Madelon, mayhap, for when the sun sank, leaving a quieter sky behind, life seemed a perfect gift, and their joy increased at every moment till they thought their hearts would break.

We shall always remember Étampes, Abélard said, laying his hand on Héloïse. Hark! some gleemen are singing in the street, and he asked Héloïse if she remembered the gleemen in the rue des Chantres. Do I remember! she answered. And they descended the long stairs to listen to the love song the gleemen were singing to a lute accompaniment; but on perceiving the religious they stopped singing the song, thinking it unseemly for a friar or nun to hear it in public, and began an Ave Maria:

Qui de s'ame
Veut oster le fiel amer,
Nostre Dame
Jor et nuit doit reclamer.
Fole amor pour lui amer
Jetons fuer:
Qui ne l'aime de douz cuer
Bien se puet chetif clamer.

Porte du ciel,
De Paradis planche et ponz,
Sorse de miel,
De douceur pecine et fonz

D'enfer qui tant est parfonz
  Nous deffent.
Qui non crient peu a de sens
  Car n'i a rive ne fonz.

  Douce dame,
Par mult vraie entencion
  Cors et ame
Met en ta protection.
Prie sanz dilation
  Ton fil douz,
Qu'il nous face vivre touz
  In terra viventium.

The words are better than the tune, gleemen, Abélard said. I will write you another to-night which perchance will be worthier of the words than the one you sing to it; and hoping that he would be inspired, the gleemen thanked him, but he noticed that they did not begin to sing at once. They are waiting, Madelon said, till the friar and the nuns are out of hearing before they commence a song more welcome to their customers. It may be so, Abélard answered indifferently, for his thoughts were on some quiet spot in the forest where he might be alone with Héloïse. But the forest seemed full of voices, voices came from every side, and, seeking to escape from the townspeople out for an evening stroll, the lovers struggled from one sandy hollow into another, through tall pines rising out of the sand. Lovers would be here keeping trysts, said Abélard, if the town were not amusing itself awaking forest echoes. You'll not miss my company, said Madelon; my tongue has clattered in your ears since early morning, so I will leave you to your own thinkings. Do not go too far, Abélard replied, for we cannot return to the inn alone without raising suspicion against ourselves. I shall sit in the vale beyond and tell my beads, as is my wont before going to bed. But sleep not, said Abélard, for the darkness is so deep that we might not be able to find thee. I shall not sleep, she answered, and Héloïse drew closer to Abélard. All this afternoon I have been thinking of thee, she said.

Abélard answered: is it strange that thou shouldst think of me? We think of each other always, she replied, but there are moments when each longs for the other more intensely than at other moments. If desire were without ebb and flow, we should not be able to bear the strain, Abélard answered. Abélard, I would speak plainly with thee. It was not for kisses then that we came here? he asked, and she answered: thy kisses and thine embraces I would not be without, nor could be without. Abélard, do not kiss me, for I would speak to thee of thyself and I would speak of myself. If we were caught and taken back to Paris! Think not of Fulbert, think only of me, Abélard answered. Madelon watches for us, but she prays for herself, telling her beads, and will fall asleep over them.

Héloïse forgot to answer her lover, and in the silence of the pines they lay in each other's arms, happy in each other's atmosphere, afraid to speak, for a word would break the spell of their delight. It was for moments like these that we met, Héloïse said at last; it is for our love that we live, but it's only now that I begin to know love, for in the beginning, Abélard, I was not true to thee nor to myself. It was not thy manhood that I loved, but thy genius. Thy genius exalted me, compelled me to throw myself at thy feet, but that was not love but vanity. Abélard, I would tell thee all things. I would have thee know me as God knows me; but words are vain, and oneself is a burden to oneself. I would have thee, Abélard, love me as I love thee: I would have thee love the woman that I am. Ah, I know it is the woman in me that thou lovest, but in the beginning it was the learned girl of whom Paris was talking that drew thee to me, and I was proud of my learning and grateful to it for having gained thee to me. But now I would cast the learned girl out of myself and I would cast the philosopher out of thee, leaving naught but the woman and the man for each to love the other through eternity. We meet in this vale at night for love, but methinks that we must have met long, long ago in the ages back, perhaps before the beginning of time. This moment is but a moment in a love story without beginning and without end. It may seem to thee that I am talking only as the mad

talk. But I am not talking, Abélard, I am thinking; I am not thinking, Abélard, I am dreaming; I am not dreaming, Abélard, I am feeling; and in this moment I am consonant with the tree above me and the stars above the tree; I am amid the roots of the hills. It may be, Abélard, that I am a little mad at this moment, but we are all too sane, and whosoever has not passed from sanity to insanity has perhaps never tasted the final essence, the residue of things. I would, too, that thou wert a little mad here in this vale, the dark trees above us, the stars shining through the tree-tops. And Madelon, Abélard answered, saying her beads in the vale. Thou wouldst strike a jarring note, for alas, we are divided, Héloïse answered sadly, and I am sorry that thou canst not love as I do. So already, Héloïse, even in this moment thou hast a fault to find. No, I find no fault, but I would have thee tell me why I was sent to thee, for hast thou not often traced the hand of God in our meeting? There is a reason for all things, though we cannot trace it, Abélard replied, and I might ask thee: why was I saved from love of woman till I met thee in the cathedral? Words fail us, Abélard, and truth eludes us. Am I the true lover, or is it thou? Canst thou answer, or is it that time alone holds the answer? We are divided again, we who have been united. We are not divided, Héloïse; we shall never be divided. We have existed always, united in the end as we were in the beginning, and it cannot be said that we shall be parted come what may.

It is as thou speakest it that I feel my love, she said, as a thing that always was and ever shall be. That our love, he answered, was before the beginning of time is my belief, and I believe, too, that it shall not end with time. Then I have heard what I wished to hear, Abélard, for it has always seemed to me that our love came to us from the stars, and since our love awakened almost the same thought in thee thou wilt be spared, as I shall be, the shame of regret. Regret nothing, Abélard, for I swear thy love of me shall not steal a single jewel from thy crown of glory. How came I into this knowledge? It was revealed to me as my love was revealed to me, as thy love was revealed to thee, as all things are revealed. And now I have told thee all. Our love shall not cost thee

a single jewel, not one, she repeated, rising to her feet, and they stood, looking at each other, Abélard marvelling at the beauty of her eyes; and remembering that he had seen them wistful and far away, he wondered at seeing them open and confident. My love is dearer—— Our love, Héloïse interrupted, is part of thy renown; it is our business to protect it, for without it we perish, that is what was upon my mind to tell; now we must go in search of Madelon. And they went from vale to vale calling; at last a sudden ray of moonlight discovered her asleep. Madelon, hast thou no ears for the nightingales? A thousand are singing about thee. She roused a little, and, moaning for her bed, followed them to the inn. Begin telling thy beads, Héloïse, for it will make a good appearance. Begin telling thy beads, Madelon, and myself will make show with my breviary.

And in their different beds all three slept till the prime of the morning was over, and the hope of reaching a certain village by evening was almost gone. But morning and evening the forest is safe for the religious, so said the innkeeper. The robbers that infested it would not dare to attack them, he averred, and he knew the ways of the forest robbers, having had himself on more times than one to pay blackmail to save his house from plunder and his guests from being carried off and held to ransom. But the religious have no cause to fear, so severely were the robbers punished on different occasions for robbing them, so cruel were the punishments inflicted upon them when caught, and so rigorous was the search made for them after every robbery or murder committed. A friar like yourself, reverend sir, was murdered and robbed on a lonely bit of the road between here and Saint-Jean-de-Braie, a large village or town within the skirts of the forest, two leagues, two and a half, maybe, from Orléans. The robber fled, but the religious have power with the King, and a price was put on his head, and money, as you will know, reverend sir, produces every virtue as well as every vice. The robber was betrayed at last, and as he had been a terror in the district for some time, a curious death was devised for him, one that would bring the people far and wide to see; and they came in thick crowds, for the robber was to be laid at length

on the floor of the scaffold to have his belly eaten out by a dog trained for the job. The condemned was told what his punishment was to be, and he must have suffered in thought as much as he did upon the scaffold. The agony his eyes bespoke when he saw the dog straining at the chain will never be forgotten by those who saw it. He was shriven by a friar of the Order of the man he had killed, and allowed to kiss the Cross before the dog was let loose upon him, an animal well trained, who in less than ten minutes was pulling out the entrails, casting them to and fro while the man was yet alive. A cruel punishment, full of sickening forebodings before the moment came, but not worse, I ween, than the punishment inflicted upon him who stole the sacred vessels from the cathedral in Orléans, for I was there at the time and can tell that the flaying was skilfully performed, the skin of the robber's leg being withdrawn from the flesh even as a stocking might be. He screamed terribly and begged to be killed outright, but this could not be, for his punishment included the lifting of the skin from his belly, and my word! it was thrown over his face like an apron. The water test is maybe as fierce a suffering as any, so the executioner himself told me, for pouring pints and quarts and gallons into a man until his guts are distended like bladders tends to suffocation, and the drying of him in a warm room is not less an infliction than the pouring. It is in the warmest room, it appears, that his will yields, and the heresy that he cherishes is foregone and denied. So it was upon a heretic that the water test was practised—and Abélard asked what his terrible heresy might have been. One of the Pastorals, for certain, but his name has passed my mind, answered the innkeeper; a rebel against his Lord and Master, and a believer that the reign of the Father and the Son was over and that of the Ghost had begun. A terrible belief to hold indeed, Abélard replied, and did he die in this belief? Troth and faith he did, reverend sir, though it was held as truth at the time that if he had taken a little less water, or if the drying had been less quickly done, he would have repented and died shriven and received into the Church again. But if there are no robbers to fear, Abélard asked, in the forests, thanks to the condign measures

thou hast described so well, innkeeper, there are wolves? The wolves, reverend sir, feed so well at this season of the year upon young deer and fawns, picking up the young of the wild swine occasionally, that the traveller goes his way unafraid. Of what are you talking, brother Pierre? Héloïse asked. Of wolves, Abélard answered, whereupon she related the story of the wolf which she had not succoured in the great wolf-hunt, though he howled plaintively at her door for it to be opened. Yet we are venturing into a forest filled with wolves, she said. Abélard whispered in her ear: the two-legged wolves are more fearsome than the four; let us away. Whereupon he helped his nuns into their pillions and they started forth on the next stage of their journey, hoping to reach before sundown the village of Chécy.

But to reach Chécy before nightfall they would have to hasten, and the innkeeper told them that the road through the forest looped so that the village of Lorris might be taken into the circuit; but there was no need for him to follow this winding, he would find a by-path across certain low hills which he could not miss. Abélard did not feel sure that the by-path might not be missed, but to hear the road explained out again would be merely a waste of time, and so they hastened towards the forest in a sort of half-knowledge of the way, allowing the horses to trot a little, thinking that they might draw rein when they passed through the fringe of birch-trees that encircled with their pallor the great district of pines that showed in black masses over against Étampes. Now we are well within the forest, Abélard said, as much in the forest as if we were in the middle of it; and he asked Héloïse to peep over the undergrowth that lined the rutted path down which they were riding, so that she might see the pines rising up naked and bare some fifty or sixty feet, some straight, some leaning, in endless aisles. Like the spears, Héloïse said, of Crusaders going into battle; and how penetrating is the smell of the resin. But the pines were in patches only, and the forest passed quickly into rocky hillsides overgrown with oak and beech; and so faint was the path they followed that Abélard often asked Héloïse and Madelon to draw rein while he went forward in search of the

path, for if we all went forward together, he said, we should not be able to go back to where the path ends: a tree is no sure landmark; one forgets which tree, and wanders in a circle. I've got it, he cried to them, and they came forward, the forest getting lonelier as they proceeded into it.

All bird cries have ceased, and we hear only the sighing of the boughs, Héloïse said, and the smell of the forest is different from all other smells; a more mysterious smell is about, a smell of earth and moss. There is also a warm smell, said Madelon, that reminds me of our Brittany forests, the great forest about Clisson, where we shall be—Héloïse, myself and my boy—before the month's end, should we catch a fast-sailing barge from Orléans. Did he not say a bit over three leagues from Étampes we should find the by-path that would save us several leagues' journey? Abélard asked, and some hundreds of feet after he told them to rein in while he went on ahead in search of the path. Here it is, he cried, from a clearing; we have but to follow the path that leads through the hollows yonder up to the rising ground that the innkeeper spoke of. He spoke to me of oak-trees, and here they are. And they rode beneath the boughs not yet in full leaf, following the path as it wound through hollows, losing it and finding it amid rocks, pushing their way through thickets that seemed impenetrable at a distance but did not prove so hard to force through as they had appeared. There is a rutted way under the brambles, Abélard said; cattle and horses have been through here; and stooping low in their saddles, they broke through somehow, losing bits of clothing in the passage. Soon after the path led them up hills, through thorn and hazel mingled with interspaces, till it brought them to a heath, and Abélard said: those pines standing so solitary at the end of the lake embedded in rocks are the trees that the innkeeper told me I was to look out for. We have not missed the way, he continued; look back and see the forest that we have come through. And he pointed to a dark ragged line of pines flowing down the northern sky. But is our way to the right or to the left? Madelon asked. To the left, he answered; we have to ride southward, keeping the setting sun on our right.

Once more they plunged into the forest, and this time it was all birch, and while wandering they learnt some facts regarding this tree from Madelon, who told them that in Brittany, in the wilder parts, birch bark was used by the peasants to thatch their cottages. But this was not all. The birch possessed many qualities which Madelon was willing to tell, but her loquacity was interrupted by the spectacle of many uprooted trees. The great storm of some three years ago, she said, has laid them low, turning their roots up into the air, leaving great holes behind. A sad sight it was truly, all these dead trees, dead or dying, for some, though their roots were broken, were coming into leaf; the last leaves they will bear, Abélard said; next spring they will be lying leafless. The travellers were sorry for the poor trees, and wondered how it was that a clump remained here and there unharmed; sometimes it was a single tree that had managed to keep its roots unbroken. The wind seems to have whirled about the forest at random, Abélard said; leaving some spots untouched, tearing the slender rooted birches as if they were reeds, unearthing the great elms and sparing only the oaks. The oak, said Madelon, is rarely uprooted, for its roots go deeper than any other tree; some say its roots go as deep as its branches go high. Fine trees, she said, are those about us, almost as great as the oaks of Clisson, over against the castle of Clisson. You know it well, master philosopher; I needn't tell you the distance between Clisson and Le Pallet; you know it better than I do. And you know, too, that in our country it is said (and who should know the value of the oak better than the Breton?) that no tree is as useful to man and to beast as the oak. Many a good meal myself, my father and kindred have made out of the oak mast. The oxen rejoice and eat the oak mast greedily and fatten on it, and the pigs rejoice in it even more than the oxen. In the forest of Clisson, as master Abélard knows well, Héloïse, every farmer garners as much as two hundred and forty bushels of acorns for the oxen, mingling them with a like quantity of beans and lupins and drenching them well. For the building of ships and the making of houses there is no timber like the oak. A man with an oak rafter over his

head is always sure of his roof. The oak is a good tree from end to end; there's nothing about the oak that man can't put to his use and benefit. The leaves of the oak make the best litter for cattle, and one of the Crusaders, who had been as far as Hungary and come back, tells a tale of a certain water which transmutes the leaves of this tree into brass, iron and copper; and in Brittany the leaves decocted in wine make an excellent gargle for a sore throat. Even the shade of the oak is good to man. If he has walked a long distance and is hot, no doubt he rests well, Abélard said. There's more in the shade of the oak than that, replied Madelon; many a paralytic has sat down in the shade of an oak with his crutches laid against the tree, and if he sleeps long enough in the shade, he will rise up and walk, leaving his crutches behind for sign of his cure, and that others may do as he did.

The oak is not like any other tree; it is magic, a spell, for him who would turn a black horse into a dapple grey; he has but to give the animal oak buttons mixed with his oats and he will alter his colour in a few days. Thou'rt forgetting, Madelon, the power of the oak over the mind, said Abélard; the oak grove was the cathedral of our ancestors. Not a whit does that surprise me, said Madelon, for who can walk in these shades without awe? Awesome indeed they are, Héloïse whispered, in Latin, and they continued to talk together in that language, for of Madelon's tongue already they had had enough. A thought of Valeda, the prophetess maiden, came into their minds, of her strange story, and of Cæsar, Cato and Virgil, for all these great folk were associated with the oak-tree. They remembered too that every tree has a spirit that lives and dies with it, its titular deity, and their eyes roved over the aged oaks under which they were riding, in expectation that at some moment or other a gracious apparition would step forth to meet them. But as none came forth, Héloïse asked if the hamadryad was found in oaks or in beeches, for a great beech had just come into view, and it seeming a likely habitation for one, they drew rein and began to recite verses, to Madelon's great discontent. For the beech, said she, is not as serviceable a tree as the oak, but the pigs

fatten finely upon the beech mast, almost as well as upon acorns. What else besides its mast is the beech good for? Abélard asked. Why you, a philosopher, surely should know that buckets and shovels (and the best) are made out of beech wood. We should have been glad of a little beech wood last winter in the rue des Chantres, for not once did we go to our beds without feeling like ice to the knees, as Héloïse can tell you, master Abélard. A beech log is the best of all for burning, better than oak or elm. And is that all the beech can give? Isn't that enough? she answered, but there is more; the finest charcoal is gotten from the beech. And a charcoal-burner is hereabouts, lopping the trees for his kiln, pollarding, as some call it, Madelon continued; we may come upon his hut at any moment, and I'll warrant it to be the same as his father and forefathers built before him, beech poles bent together, tied at the top, and thatched with birch bark, a clerical hat it is, for all the world. Without a hole to let the smoke out, said Abélard. Of what use, she answered sharply, would a hole be in the roof to a man who never lights a fire within, always without? But his dinner? interposed Héloïse. His dinner is cooked in front of his hut, where there's plenty of fuel. A happy man is the charcoal burner, or should be, for he is the one amongst us who can be sure of never going to bed with cold shins. More than that, he is the one amongst us who can get out of this world easiest. Of all deaths charcoal fumes are—— Hast forgotten that hell awaits him who seeks death? Abélard interrupted. I haven't forgotten that God is good, she answered; and his goodness is always in my mind when I'm saying my beads. But let us not be talking of the man's soul before we look inside his house and find him lying stark, mayhap. How she enjoys hearing her tongue clatter, Abélard whispered to Héloïse, and Madelon continued to talk all the way across the clearing till they drew rein before the hut. As their shouts brought nobody's head out of it, Abélard dismounted and looked inside. The nest is empty, the bird has flown, he said, and returned inside to look round for traces of the charcoal burner, finding only some potsherds, the residue of a broken pipkin or crock. These are what remain of him who is

gone, he said. But whither, we shall ask in vain. For where are last year's birds, and where is the man, the wife and the little ones? Let us away, said Madelon, for the wolves may have eaten them, and the ghosts that those lolloppers leave behind are the wickedest of all. But we have lost our path, Abélard answered, and reckoned on the charcoal burner to put us into it; we must encamp here. Not here, cried Madelon, the charcoal burner and his family will be about; not for all the money that you will ever earn will I spend the night here. We shall have to water our horses, Abélard said, and I see no well. Wherever man is, water cannot be far away, Madelon said. Dost not hear a sound of rippling water, Abélard? Héloïse asked, and riding down the shelving ground through the beech wood they came upon a shallow green river rippling pleasantly over pebbles, the low grassy banks putting the thought into their minds that they would not find a better ground for encampment. Nor a better place for a camp fire than the flat stones lying about this high rock, Abélard remarked. A fine shelter it would be for man and beast if a storm were to arise. Let us build these flat stones into a hearth, and when that is done we shall go into the beech grove and return with many armfuls of sticks and dried leaves and build a fire that will keep away the wolves and bears. But we shall have to seek better grass for our horses; here it is sedgy and tough, and our horses will not crop it willingly. I like not to separate ourselves from them, but they are quiet animals and will not break their tethers. He returned soon after burdened with the three saddles, and Héloïse and Madelon having built a hearth, he set himself to the task of lighting the fire with beech branches and dried leaves that had already been gathered for him. Not an easy task, he said, as he flicked steel and flint together, my tinder being none of the best. Héloïse watched the lighting of the fire. Now it catches, she said, it begins; we can blow it into a blaze, and she went down on her knees to blow, amused at the lighting of the fire as a child would be, Abélard chatting gaily of the Israelites coming out of Egypt and finding their way through deserts, just as we are finding ours, casual Israelites of a day and a night, antitypes in a small way of those in

the Bible, he said, helping the time away with such light discourse till the evening meal was eaten and Madelon produced her beads.

The moment had come therefore for them to seek their souls in the twilight, and leaving Madelon, already nearly asleep, before she had only half her rosary accomplished, they walked, hearkening to the forest sighing for weariness of the prattling river. As they passed out of the dark beech wood into the grey moonlight they were caught by a sudden awe that brought them back through the birch-trees, whither they had gone thinking to hear the nightingales; but not one was singing, and the stillness set their hearts almost fluttering and sealed the words upon their lips. I am afraid of the forest, Héloïse said, and Abélard sought to calm her fears, saying: the forest is wonderful. Listen to the silence, for silence in the forest is different from any other. But the forest is never silent, Héloïse interposed. It is always mumbling to itself. I am afraid. Shall we go back to Madelon, he asked, or sit here among the ferns? And in answer to her question if he were afraid, he answered that he was not, which was barely the truth, for with the decline of the light the forest seemed to him to have put off its casual associations with man and to have returned to itself, a strange, remote self, nearer to beasts than to man. We are all aliens to the forest, he said, all save charcoal burners and wolf-hunters. Héloïse, who would put the forest and its mysterious mutterings out of her mind, begged him to tell her of the first stirrings of his genius, for there must have been a moment, she said, when it was whispered to thee that thou wast not as other men. I think I always knew that, Abélard answered, but if thou wouldst hear a truthful account of the self that inspired thee in the cloister, I must tell that it first appeared one day at dinner some thirty odd years ago. My mother was filling a large bowl with lettuce, cucumber, beetroot and onion (she made excellent salads) but my father looked upon salads as waste, saying that he did not believe that anybody cared to eat raw vegetables, and being always hard to curb, and restless beyond most boys, I began to argue with him, and he said: Pierre, keep a quiet tongue in thy head. He passed on the salad

bowl, and seeing that I helped myself largely, a smile began to trickle into his eyes: Pierre, I checked thee a while ago, but now I give thee leave to plead the cause of raw vegetables. Whereupon I talked for ten minutes, my father not answering, and, hurt by his silence, I fell to thinking that I had failed in argument. It was my mother who, reading dejection in my face and taking pity on me, told me in secret that my father had said to her, when they were alone: I can't answer for the red-haired ones (my brothers have red hair) but Pierre is wonderful. For these words I have never ceased to think of my father with affection. I am sure no boy ever talked like thee, Héloïse said. But afterwards? It seems to me that afterwards I talked to everybody who would listen to me, Abélard answered; taking pleasure in the argument for the sake of it, caring very little which side I took, my pleasure being to quicken dead minds, to awaken thought; for the world, it seems to me, is sloughing its skin of centuries very slowly, almost unwillingly, too lazy to use its wits, liking nothing so well as to lie like a pig in a sty; without reason, the world is no better. It seems to me, he continued, his interest in his portrait of himself waxing as he talked, that I began to look upon myself as a swineherd who, irate at the sloth of the swine, was moved to prick them up with a goad. Thy simile is a false one, Héloïse replied, for the swineherd would like the porkers to lie and fatten. All similes are defective if pressed too far, Abélard answered, but I cannot find a better image of myself and the world than a swineherd poking a pig out of its unclean straw. I'm sure I'm telling myself truly if I say that I came very soon to see the world as a sty full of pigs that it was my business to compel to rise up and go so that the sty might be cleansed. I like to goad the porkers. But is it cruel to desire a clean world? I begin to understand, Héloïse interrupted, why the Church did not attract thee; in the Church thou wouldst not be thyself. I was always more interested in my own thoughts, he answered, than in the thoughts of any body of men, but this is not egoism, for only one's personal thoughts are human; the thoughts that we collect are unclean as straw that has been lain in too often, and the fine phrases that Champeaux and Anselm wrap their

thoughts in fail to conceal their evil smell. I have often wondered if these men lack the courage to express their own thoughts. It may be that they are without individual thoughts and find their pleasure in trying to cleanse the ideas prevalent in the streets, treating them like dirty brats, whose faces are washed with spits, and whose noses are held between forefinger and thumb. But thou, Abélard, wouldst cut the brats' throats and throw the corpses into the river, Héloïse remarked; and Abélard thought he detected a tone of regret in her voice. I would like to humble the swine in their own sight, till to escape from my sarcasms they would throw themselves over precipices into the sea. But if they did, their heads would bear them up, for their heads are but bladders. I think thou art sorry, Héloïse, that I am so immodest a man. And if that thought has come into thy mind I cannot blame thee for it, for it's often come into mine. Time and again I have tried to check myself, to conform, but no man checks himself or even conforms, if he be a man. And because thou couldst not conform thou art not a priest, Héloïse said, half to Abélard, half to herself. As a priest I should not be myself, he answered. But once a priest, she said, thou wouldst speedily be made a bishop, and from bishop to archbishop thou wouldst rise quickly; a cardinal's hat would soon be thine, for the Church cannot pass over men of genius; they are too rare to be passed over, and once a cardinal the papacy would fall into thy hand like a ripe plum. In St. Peter's chair I should be less than I am now, Abélard answered; there have been hundreds of popes but only one Abélard. It was on Héloïse's tongue to say: a man cannot spend his life wandering in thickets by himself, springing on the unwary from time to time, and as if he discerned her unspoken thought, Abélard said, speaking to himself as much as to her: it may be that I have been myself and nothing but myself for too many years, and there is a time for everything, for personal and collective endeavour. It may be, too, that the time has come for me to make my peace with the world, for one of our oldest proverbs is, that an old monkey pleases nobody. But can we change ourselves?

We are always changing, it seems to me, Héloïse answered.

We are always changing, but we do not know in what direction we are changing. If we did. . . . I would believe that thou lovest me, Abélard, she said at last, but thy mind is the dearest thing in the world to thee, dearer than life; dearer than I can ever be. Abélard was moved to dispute this, saying that he taught philosophy for money and nothing else. We all speak many vain words, she answered, and a man may be better judged by his acts. If thou wert moved to philosophy only by the money's worth, how was it that thou didst part with thy lands, throwing them to thy brothers like an old coat. Thy lands were given away so that thy mind might be saved, a mind that would dwarf in Brittany. And it was to save thy mind that thou didst turn from the priesthood. It matters naught to thee that there is no advancement outside the Church. And it was for thy mind's sake that a deaf ear was turned to the women who came before me. It was not lest a wife might rob me of some of my mind, he answered, that I am unwed, and since, O subtle Héloïse, thou wouldst see thy Abélard from end to end like a valley seen from a hill-top, I will tell thee that the young seek new lips always, never caring to kiss the same more than three or four times, and you women are as easily wearied as men, and seek change as often, for it is our mortal fate to seek till we find. At last thy love came, and I believe it to be the sum of all my early desires and aspirations, a love that will abide in me always, for it is a truth that whosoever has loved in his youth does not return to love. We can drink of the love draught but once; whether we drink it in youth or in middle age matters little. In middle age the wine is headier; and he who drinks at forty never escapes from the swoon and intoxication. How wonderfully thou speakest, Abélard; how wise, oh, how wise, she said, laying her hands on her lover's shoulders. But thou must not turn from philosophy, for I love my philosopher, who is greater than Plato or Aristotle. But what is that sound going by? she asked. A nightjar, Abélard answered, seeking its food; it will be gone presently. But any sound is better than this stillness, Héloïse replied, and as if in answer to her a long wail as of a soul in agony came out of the heart of the forest. It is but a brown owl,

Abélard said, but its cry is the most melancholy in nature. And since thou art afraid of the forest and its cries, let us return to Madelon. Hush, Abélard, speak no word, but look; and, raising himself on his elbow, it seemed to him that he caught sight of a grey form slinking across the moonlit glade. A wolf, maybe, Abélard whispered, and thinking of what other animal it might be, they returned to Madelon, whom they found dozing by some embers; on these were thrown quickly some dry wood, a great fire was built up, and Héloïse was assured, in Latin, that they need fear no attack from the wolf. Wolves attack men only when they are in numbers, and driven to it by hunger, Abélard said.

We have a long day's travel before us and would do well to sleep as far into the dawn as we can. Whereupon the three rolled themselves into their cloaks and slept till the grey silent dusk of day awoke them one by one, Abélard being the first to awake; and he lay thinking between waking and sleeping for a long time, wondering when the birds would begin to sing. All were asleep in the branches, and the animals that he had heard moving in the darkness overnight were fast in their burrows and lairs. At last he heard Héloïse's voice. Art awake, Abélard? she asked. Yes, he answered, and Héloïse whispered: Madelon is still asleep, let us not awake her. But hearing them telling their dreams, Madelon awoke. I too dreamed of horses whinnying, she said, and instinctively all three sprang to their feet and hastened down the river bank, afraid to speak their thoughts. Our horses are safe, God be merciful, Abélard cried; for being in advance of the women he caught sight of them first, grazing peacefully about a dead wolf and her cub. If the horses could speak, they could tell a tale, said Madelon; and they continued talking through a cloudy morning of May, puzzled to discover in their imagination how the wolf and her cub had come by their deaths, all wearing thoughtful countenances till midday, when a likely explanation of the mystery came into Abélard's mind. He was about to tell it to Héloïse, but a cry from Madelon checked the story on his lips. We are well at the world's end, she said, and looking round they saw a blasted oak and a few pines at the end of a desolate track filled with great rocks.

Truly a desolate place, Abélard said, visited only by the winds. And the witches, said Madelon, who come hither by night on their broomsticks to assemble under that tree. After a little while it fell out that two ravens should come out of the forest and alight upon the white branches. I will not ride past them, Madelon cried. Abélard too was afraid, but conquering his emotion, he seized her bridle. Tell thy beads with bowed, devotional head, he muttered, and the power of the ravens will be taken from them. We owe Madelon a good deal, Abélard said, in Latin, and we are paying with our patience all that we owe her. A troublesome old thing, he grunted, and began to tell Héloïse that the dead wolf might have had a den by the river, but scenting rain—— The sky was clear at midnight, said Héloïse. Animals have a foreseeing that we have not, he answered. To-day is all cloud, it will rain before night, and if not to-night, to-morrow. But go on with thy story, Pierre. Afraid that her den would be flooded by the rising of the river, the wolf remembered the hollow beech up the hillside. She seemed to be carrying something, a cub more likely than anything else, for she returned the way she came for another (as many as three and four go to a litter) and while carrying the last cub, or the last but one, my thought is that to avoid some scent that the wind carried down to her, that of a bear maybe, she came through our horses and was kicked and trampled to death, for horses like not the smell of a wolf. Thy sleep was disturbed, Héloïse said, by horses neighing. Yes, but they seemed to me to be screaming rather than neighing; it was the screams of the horses that put it into my head that the wolf and the cub met their deaths under their hooves. It may have fallen out differently, he continued; nature is rich in imaginations. However the wolf and the cub met their deaths, Héloïse answered, certain it is that a cub, or maybe two, are starving in a hollow beech-tree, and one or more may be starving by the river. Those by the river will drown when the river rises, Abélard said. We are fairly lost in this forest, Madelon cried, drawing rein, and the twain forgot the wolf cubs in the dread that a long roaming might be their fate, trying to keep in a straight line by the trees

but turning in a circle always. It was yesterday we lost the track, Abélard said; let us keep our eyes on the ground, for tracks there are always in the forest. Any track is better than no track, be it the hooves of deer or of cattle, or of the wild ponies that abound in the forest. At most we may rouse a wild boar from his lair, Madelon muttered.

And they rode on and on through endless aisles, losing heart, for it seemed to them that they were under a spell. At last Madelon cried: somebody is living yonder, for I see a drying shirt, and Abélard answered: a drying shirt is a good token of a man. And they rode towards the shirt, but on their way thither a great dog bounded forward, causing Madelon's pony to shy violently, bringing down the drying shirt. Whereupon a savage fellow came out of a hole or cavern in the hillside flourishing a great club, causing Madelon's pony to rear. Abélard cried to him to withhold, but he did not seem to understand and continued to flourish the club. At last the strap that held Madelon to the pillion broke, and at the same moment a woman came from the dwelling-hole towards them, her face aflame, but seeing that her mate was not in danger and that a woman had tumbled heavily, she called the dog off and returned to the cavern for water. The water or the sound of her own language, or both, brought Madelon back to herself, and she murmured thanks in Breton, their common language bringing them into a reconciliation, which was quickly passed on to Héloïse and Abélard. Tell them, said Abélard, that we are on our way to Saint-Jean-de-Braie and lost our way yesterday in the forest. Tell him that he will be rewarded if he will lead us to the village we are seeking. The man appeared not to understand Abélard's French, but as soon as the French was translated into Breton a brighter light broke upon his face, and he seized the bridle of Madelon's horse and called upon the others to follow him. His house, said Abélard, seems to have been begun by the dislodging of a rock from the hillside, but it must be a poor sort of place to live in; and what his purpose is in living in this wild forest is not clear, for he is not a charcoal-burner, and what other trade may be practised here it is not easy to guess. The woman, said Héloïse, is his

wife, but how did he persuade her to follow him? Wherever a man goes he will find a woman to follow him, Madelon answered; and she began to put questions to their guide, and on their way to Saint-Jean-de-Braie they learnt that the man was a wolf-hunter, and on hearing that such was his trade they told Madelon to tell him that they had seen a she-wolf bring her young from the river and lodge them in the bole of a great beech-tree, not far from the sheeling of a whilom charcoal-burner. Tell him, said Héloïse, that it will be a kindness to kill those cubs and save them from a lingering death. But when this message was transmitted to the wolf-hunter a bleakness came into his face, and it was some while before it became clear to them that he was unwilling to kill the cubs. Madelon was bidden to inquire out the reason, and she reported that he was minded not to kill the cubs but to feed them, a gentleness of heart that they did not think to find in the hunter. At which Madelon was charged to return to the Breton language and to keep to it throughout, it being the only language in which he could make plain his reasons for preferring to feed the cubs rather than to kill them, and the story he had to tell, translated from Breton into French by Madelon, was that he owed his appointment to his skill in imitating the cry of the wolf; his business was to counterfeit the wolf from the top of a fir. The cry begins, he said, low down in the throat and rises into the howl that you know of. For a long time I get no answer to my cry; I repeat it now and again from the fir-tree, and sooner or later the wolf prowling in search of lambs or fawns to feed his mate begins to think that she is calling to him for help; and leaving his quest he comes, and the hunters who are stationed at various corners of the wood have fair shots at him as he passes.

Men do strange things for a livelihood, Abélard answered, after having had the story transmitted to him; and in all my travels I have never heard of a stranger way of getting a livelihood. But why will he feed the cubs? Ask him that, Madelon. The wolf-hunter's answer was that wolves were scarcer now than they were formerly, and that if they continued to lessen in numbers he might lose his job.

CHAP. XVII.

ONCE more saying that they were weary of their pillions Héloïse and Madelon dismounted, and giving their horses in charge of the guide they walked through the darkening forest, hoping to be safely in the inn at Saint-Jean-de-Braie before the rain fell. The guide seemed doubtful, saying that they might be caught in the first shower of rain, but he hoped, however, to arrive in the village before the storm broke. But thou'lt get the full force of the storm on thy way back, said Abélard, at which the guide smiled vaguely, his shoulders, face and gesture seeming to say that rain could not hurt a serf. A deeper twilight gathered and a faint pattering was heard on the leaves overhead, and the forest, hitherto so morose, seemed to become friendly, even sociable, the pattering seeming to Héloïse like the feet of the fairies. Or the voices of the fairies themselves, Abélard answered. The forest welcomes the rain, he continued; it was parched, and all the young leaves are opening to receive the warm shower: the rain will freshen the waters of the streams and ponds.

A green snake hissed through the grass, showing a beautiful mottled belly as it went by, and a little bird sang despite the rain. A robin, Madelon said, and she began to tell stories; but in answer to the guide, who seemed puzzled at the travellers' sudden delay, she called upon Héloïse and Abélard to mount their horses. We must hasten, she said, or we shall be caught in all the storm. But the rain is so pleasant to listen to, Abélard answered. The guide warned them that it would be well to get out of the forest before the wind rose, but they took no heed of his warnings till the wind sent down all the rain that had collected in the leaves above them, drenching them to the skin. How far are we now, Abélard asked, from Saint-Jean-de-Braie? The guide answered: less than a third of a league. Anything to be away from those drenching trees, Abélard answered, and the women drew the hoods of their cloaks low down over their faces. But the rain penetrated everywhere, and very soon they began to talk of rain behind their ears, of rain on their necks, of rain flowing

down their backs. They seemed to be sitting in water, so they said, and their shoes were filled with rain. My ankles and legs are soaked, there's no part of me that isn't wet, Héloïse cried. It matters little how much more falls, for we are as wet as we can be, said Abélard. But ten minutes later Héloïse answered: I am much wetter than I was ten minutes ago, and seem to be getting wetter every moment. I am wetter than I was, he answered, but we are out of the drip of the forest at last and within sight of Saint-Jean-de-Braie. Ask the guide if the inn is a good one; and while Madelon was translating French into Breton and Breton into French again, the trees were again shaken, this time so roughly that it was as if a cistern had been emptied over them. Never were human beings as wet as we, Abélard said; and when they reached the skirts of the forest the rain fell so fiercely that it was hard to force the horses through the downpour.

So a welcome moment it was when the innkeeper came forward to meet them and took charge of the horses, and Abélard, after rewarding the guide with money, and thanking him, followed Héloïse and Madelon into the inn kitchen, where there was a fire burning on a great hearth built into the middle of the floor, the smoke curling and escaping as best it could through a hole in the roof sheltered from the wind by a louvre, a sort of tin screen shapen like a conical hat. And the fire being a big one, they were already enveloped in a cloud of steam, whereupon Abélard warned them of their wanton disregard of their health. God will look after his own, Madelon murmured humbly, and the innkeeper's wife said: but this kitchen is used by carriers, pedlars and gleemen; and it is in truth no place for such as you, turning to Madelon and Héloïse; nor is it a place for you, reverend sir. Alas there are no guest-chambers, so I will bring the sisters to my room, and you, reverend sir, will dry your garments as best you may before this fire, and make yourself easy on one of the couches. My husband will see you get a good rug and a pillow. And then, turning to Héloïse and Madelon, she said: you will eat something before you lie down to sleep? A little milk is all that I could swallow to-night, said Héloïse; we have come a long way from our convent at Saint-Denis

and are too tired to eat, but hope to reach, with God's good will, a convent of our Order near Nantes. As soon as you see one of my omelets, appetite will come to you, the innkeeper's wife answered. To-morrow I will eat an omelet, but to-night I am too tired to eat, Héloïse replied. We have ridden twenty miles through the forest; we were lost in it till we came upon the sheeling of a wolf-hunter, and it was he who led us out of the wilderness. It seemed to her that this was a sufficient account of their journey, but Madelon could not withhold her tongue and began a long narrative, to Héloïse's great weariness, who was thinking only of when she could rid herself of her clothes and lie down. You too, reverend sir, will sleep better if you have something in your stomach. Abélard promised that he would allow her to cook him an omelet, and she led Héloïse and Madelon to a spiral staircase at the end of the kitchen. In about half-an-hour I shall be with you again, reverend sir, and in this half-hour Abélard stripped himself of all his clothes and laid them out to dry, and was within the sheets of a couch in an alcove before he caught sight of the long, lean shanks of the innkeeper's wife descending the spiral staircase. You have promised to eat an omelet if I make one, and should it be to your liking, you will remember me, good father, in your prayers. Like the good sister who has left us, I am too weary to show a good appetite even for your omelet, said Abélard; but I will remember you in my prayers. And he set up a mumble that would pass for a prayer while the innkeeper's wife prepared the omelet. Your omelet, my good woman, is the tastiest that I have ever eaten, he said. My omelets are liked by all who come hither, she interjected; and he handed her back the empty plate, saying: my prayers to-night will be that God will send you much custom every night of the year, but to-night I would that you lacked some, for your custom is no doubt gleemen, pardoners and carriers, wandering folk that make much noise before getting into their beds. Have no fear lest you should be roused from the sleep you need, she replied; should any vagrant come to our door after dark, he will enter my house under promise that he does not raise his voice above a whisper and draws off his boots noiselessly. Nor delays

long between the right and the left boot, said Abélard. We must make the good father easy, she said to her husband, who had just come in from the stables, for he is going to pray that God may have mercy upon my soul, and send us good custom. My soul is as important as thine, the innkeeper grumbled, a small, red-headed man, with weak eyes like a ferret. I have relics that I would show him if he be not too weary, he said. Abélard's eyes were closing and he was asleep before the innkeeper returned, and the wife began a grumble that the promised prayers were forgotten. But that is no reason why he should not have a pillow and rug, the innkeeper answered, and Abélard slept till the voices of some gleeman who came in overnight awoke him with talk of distances and loads. The new-comers could not be else than gleemen, for their talk rolled on the money that they might gather from the pilgrims they hoped to meet, but whom they might miss, the forest being well-nigh impassable. The words: heavy muddy roads, reached his ears, and later a river was spoken of which he could not but think was the one by whose banks himself, Héloïse and Madelon had slept. A green, shallow stream, a gleeman said, in dry weather, but rising after rain into a swift race of water. We shall not cross it to-day, nor to-morrow; we should lose our bear and our dogs in the current, and ourselves, mayhap, and the gleemen began to mutter against their evil luck till Héloïse and Madelon stepped down the staircase in garments borrowed from the innkeeper's wife.

The sight of women restored confidence to the gleemen, and they called to the innkeeper for his permission to train their animals in the kitchen during the afternoon, saying that if the pleasant company assembled cared to reward the animals with a small coin or two, the animals and their owners would be grateful. The innkeeper laughed and shrugged his shoulders for answer, saying from the foot of the stairs that they might train their animals, but his guests must not be pestered nor asked to move out of their places, and of all, he would have no hat going round his inn kitchen. We are not bullies or cut-purses, the gleemen answered, whereupon the false friar and his nuns retired into a distant corner to read

their breviaries and watch the performance furtively till the company in the kitchen became oppressive, which it did during the course of the afternoon. The rain has stopped, or nearly stopped, Héloïse said; let us get a mouthful of fresh air or I choke. And rising to their feet they went towards the door, Abélard rewarding the vagrants with some money, hoping thus to gain their good will and courtesy. As they passed out the innkeeper and his wife warned the friar and his nuns that the rain had not stopped and would begin before long to fall heavily as before, but Abélard answered: we must get a breath of fresh air, and will go no farther than the stables. The talk of the ostlers will be a change from the talk we have been hearing all the morning, he whispered to Héloïse, who was asking for bread for their horses, and when the bread was eaten, naught remained but to return to the kitchen or follow the single street which seemed to be the entire village. The dropping chestnut-trees with all their standing bloom seem to lament the bad weather, Héloïse said; how sad they are under the low sky—— Like the lid of a pan, Madelon interjected, with the pan simmering underneath it. For the life of you look at the rain jumping out of the puddles. We shall be wet to our skins. But neither Héloïse nor Abélard could return to the kitchen. We must go to the end of the street, said Abélard, and at the end of the avenue they found other streets striking right and left; and it was while standing in the middle of these, asking each other how it would be to hire a house and live all their lives in Saint-Jean-de-Braie, that the rain began to fall, very dree, straight through the still air without mercy for man or beast. From the eaves, from the gutters between the low gables it flowed, making the street look like a brook, said Abélard. It will be no use taking shelter in a doorway, sooner or later we shall have to run to our inn. Summer rain hurts nobody, cried Madelon. Abélard answered that the innkeeper's wife would not be able to provide them with a second change. But if we hasten we shall escape a soaking, Héloïse replied, as she ran down the street past the patient cattle come under the chestnut-trees for shelter.

Everybody was running for shelter, any porch, any door;

and on returning to the inn they perceived some newcomers, wet and miserable as themselves, crowding round the hearth drying their clothes. One of these arrived at the same moment as themselves, and after shaking himself like a dog who has been into a river, he began to unstrap his pack, his goods, which were many, making a fine show upon the floor. Now I would that all here should cast an eye over the good things that I bring you, he said; for all that you see is of the best quality, and all were made in the fair land of France, which is enough guarantee for everything that you may be minded to buy. You all lack something, and here you will find everything you lack. All of the best quality, I say again, for everything you see was made in the fair land of France, and all things made in France are the best in the world. Let not the evil luck I met with in the forest follow me into this fine kitchen, where I am glad to be, though it would have been better for me if the sun were shining, for the sun brings us all out of our houses, and the women of this village, were they to see it, would not leave any of this fine thread for the next village, nor any of these needles, the finest I have ever known, and I have been on the road these thirty years.

A thick-set man he was, whose bulk and build may have inspired the belief in him that he had been cast for a pedlar's life, and Abélard began to look upon his cozening talk and self-depreciation as a concomitant of his trade. The lads of this village will find knives, he continued, of all kinds and sorts in my pack; all blades and handles; little knives handy to cut a goose quill into a pen, long-bladed knives to slice up a loaf or a cheese with, sheath knives to wear in your girdles to put a robber to flight with, knives that a girl can defend herself with when her lover begins to handle her knees; knives, knives, knives, and girdles too. Girdles and gloves for wenches and wives, all things that you need you will find in my pack; tell me what you lack, girls and boys, tell me what you lack. Now, gentle sir, what will you give to your lady? A comb for her hair, a purse for her girdle, a ring for her finger, a brooch for her bosom? And if none of these suit you, I will return to-morrow with a little dog,

who will love her as dearly as you do, sir, for dogs love their mistresses, and your lady would like a small, gentle dog to keep her company when a bad cold is upon her, for I can see the lady there is sniffing; three times has she sneezed, and a finer neckerchief than this she will not find to wear, and as long as she wears it no cold will dare to attack her, for it has been blessed by many a holy man, and the blessing and the quality of the silk will keep her from colds for evermore. The ladies to whom thou speakest, pedlar, Abélard answered, are nuns dressed in the casual raiment of the innkeeper's wife; we all came last night soused to the skin after a long journey through the forest. Take no offence, good sir, said the pedlar, for I only know a nun by her habit; and if the nuns that wear the clothes that have been lent to them would like a scapular or a rosary, I can let them have either at a fair price. My goods are cheaper than those sold by any other pedlar on the road. But nuns, reverend father, have nieces, and I would offer the nuns silk coifs for their nieces. You too, reverend sir, have nieces, and here is a fine comb of tortoise-shell. I will have thy tortoise-shell comb, pedlar, Abélard replied, for my niece whom I shall meet at Tours; meanwhile, I will give it in charge of the good sister whom I am conducting thither. No fault have I to find; but thanks, thanks, thanks, the customer is never wrong, never, he cried, as he wrapped the comb in a parcel, which Abélard handed to Héloïse. The man speaks well, he said in Latin, and a moment after, in French: there is a hoarseness in your throat, sister; get you to your bed, for should a sudden illness fall upon you we are undone. I had counted to reach Orléans to-morrow. You speak wise words, reverend sir, Madelon answered. I will see that our sister keeps to her bed and has plenty of warm drinks. With the help of these and God's help she will be able to travel to-morrow. Whereupon the women withdrew to the staircase, and were about to mount it when another arrival stayed them, one who looked as if he had come a long way, some five and twenty miles; more than that, maybe, so wearily did he let down his pack. But he had not laboured in vain, for he had come upon generous pilgrims who had money and had purchased something, if no more

than a little dust from the bones of the saints, some teeth that they had shed, some parings of their nails, some hair from their heads and beards.

A pardoner, Abélard said to himself, whose business lies with troubled consciences, with men and women who dread the punishments in the next world for their sins in this; and looking once more into the long, brown face, he said: of the next world of which he prates so gaily he will soon have practical experience. An opinion this was that Abélard soon found himself obliged to abate, for no sooner was the pardoner's tongue loosened than his looks began to belie him. Or is it that his greed overcomes his weariness and his wetting? Abélard asked himself, and he listened, with a half-amused, half-contemptuous smile on his lips, to the patter of the relic-seller.

Wet as I am, tired as I am, I have still a tongue in my head to tell a good story, and I will tell one to you, unless I am interrupting somebody in his story? No one has told a story this day, so if thou'rt minded, tell thine, Abélard said, and the pardoner answered quickly: since the good father bids me tell my story, I will. It is of a woman who coveted her sister's husband, and coveted him with success, for she enjoyed him in her sister's bed, a cuckold having been procured by a sleeping-potion. But such love as hers the devil puts into our minds, and very soon he withdraws the love that has tempted us into sin and we suffer much torment in our consciences. Such is the way of men and women, and the woman about whom I would tell you began very soon to hate the man from whom she had not been able a little while before to withhold herself. His face and name reminded her that the temptation she had yielded to had lost her long happiness in heaven and plunged her into endless misery in the gulf of hell, maybe. But what had been done could not be undone except by the aid of a priest, who would shrive her. But the penance he imposed upon her could not be fulfilled, and it is in this penance that the point of my story lies. The woman confessed that she had lain with her brother-in-law, and many other sins of such tremendous nature that the priest was taken aback. I know not how to deal with

you, daughter; you have earned hell ten thousand times over, for of theft and lies, adultery, fornication and incest, you seem to be guilty. I can think of no sin you haven't been guilty of except murder. The woman bowed her head and began a new story, for even of murder she was not wholly innocent, and the priest, more affrighted than ever, sat trying to think of a penance that would keep the woman quiet for the rest of her life. But her whole nature seemed to him so bent upon the pleasure of sin that he could think of none that would make her soul's salvation certain. Yet he couldn't reconcile himself to telling her that he was unable to help her, and forgetful of her body, he sat thinking of her soul, leaving her on her knees all the afternoon while he meditated, she asking him from time to time to pronounce the penance that would insure her soul against burning. The priest sat thinking how this might be done, and the best penance he could devise was to send her all over the country from shrine to shrine, muttering Paternosters and Ave Marias at each one. Only by bodily exercise can her soul be saved, he said to himself, and again fell to thinking, till the woman, unable to keep on her knees any longer, rolled over, crying to him to speak any penance, for whatever it was she would accomplish it.

It was not till many weeks afterwards, when far away on her pilgrimage, that the truth broke upon her that the penance the priest had imposed, and that she had accepted so joyfully, could not be performed, life not being long enough. Whereupon she cried out in her misery that her soul was lost. Now it was the devil tempting her, for her next thought was: since my soul is lost for ever, let me return to my sinning, for even God cannot punish me more for the sins that I have committed than He will for those that I am ready to commit. The woman's steps turned from the holy shrine whither they were going to a tavern, and at the first step she took thither a great rejoicing began in hell, all the devils crying as they danced circlewise: we shall get her, we shall get her. But there is a proverb that runs in hell as well as upon earth, that it is not well to think how we shall jug our hare before we have caught our hare. The woman's soul was not yet

lost, but it would have been lost if she had not met me, who was able to tell her that the priest that imposed the penance spoke thoughtlessly, for a penance that cannot be performed is not a valid penance, and can be revoked. I might indeed go further and say that a penance that cannot be performed has never been pronounced. The Church is always practical; her teaching has ever been that the sinner must not despair. So did I speak, the woman was soothed, and the good father present will not gainsay me: despair is the only capital sin. We must never despair; our feet must ever strive upwards, however thorny that way may be, and a relic is a great help. We hold it in our hands, we press it to our bosoms, and forthright strength is given to us. I come to you from the Holy Father, who charged me to ease all troubled consciences. In my wallet I have the Holy Father's testimony on parchment for all of you to read. He conferred upon me the right to give sacraments, to sell relics. I have it all under his own hand; the brief he gave me is in that wallet, and if you cannot read for yourselves the friar yonder will read for you. The pardoner produced from his wallet a large brief with many seals, which he said came from famous Rome, the city of God on earth, founded by Saint Peter, and it being no part of Abélard's business to challenge the authority of the relic-seller, he gazed into the parchment and handed it back, his face wearing an expression of astonishment rather than approval, and forthright the pardoner began another appraisement of his wares.

Here is a piece of the sail of Saint Peter's boat which carried Our Saviour Jesus Christ on the day that the storm arose on the Sea of Galilee, the day that He walked upon the water as if upon dry land. And here is another piece of the same sail. Three small pieces are all I have left, but I sell none for less than five shillings, which is a small price to pay for a great benefit. As none of the gleemen had five shillings to spend upon a relic, they sighed, afraid that their souls might be lost; but as soon as the pardoner produced the candle-end that the angel lighted in the tomb over against Golgotha, they forgot their souls, and their minds were gathered in admiration when the pardoner exhibited a feather

from the tail of the cock that crowed the morning that Peter denied Christ three times. He exhibited these relics without putting a price upon them, for the price of the candle-end and the cock's feather, and of all, the ointment that Mary Magdalen spread over the feet of Christ, were far beyond any money in the inn that day. And what is this? cried one of the gleemen: a tress of the Magdalen's hair? No, not the Magdalen, said the pardoner, but a curious tale hangs by this tress of hair, and I will tell it to you. This tress of hair belonged to a woman who prized her hair more than all other things. She spent all day combing and brushing it, rendering it sleek with ointment, till God in His great goodness was sorry for the woman who wasted her soul in vain attendance on her hair; so what do you think He did? He took the woman's sight away from her, and from that day she was unable to see her beautiful hair or to attend to it. It became matted and unkempt, whereupon the woman, whose whole life was now given up to God, was much grieved and affected by the thought that at the special judgment which awaits everybody on the day of their death she would appear untidy before God. So God, taking pity upon this poor woman, gave her back her sight; but no sooner was it given back to her than she returned to the attendance of her hair, forgetful of all things but the men who admired her for it. But God, knowing in His infinite wisdom that there was a core of good in this weak woman, and determined to have in heaven the soul which she was about to lose, took her hair from her. But what matter the loss of my hair if it be restored to me when my body is raised from the dead? she said. Henceforth all her life was spent praying that her hair might be restored for God to see it on judgment day. She became one of the greatest saints ever known; and now that you have heard her story, look into this tress, every single hair of which is worth a penny, and a penny is not too much; everyone here has a penny, or should have one, to spend on the hair of a great saint, who lived in a cave for five and twenty years and is now standing near to the throne of God. What is this? cried one of the wayfarers; a piece of stone? Yes, a piece of stone, answered the pardoner, of the carven statue of the

Holy Virgin which stands in a niche in the chapel of Rocamadour. A pious workman was mending her crown one day, but the ladder he was standing on was unsafe and gave way beneath him, and he would have been dashed to the ground if the Virgin had not taken him in her arms and saved his life. So great a miracle as that could not fall to any man's lot without it becoming a great power over his life. He left his bag of tools at the foot of the ladder, and wandered away like one bereft of his senses. One of the Church's greatest saints he became, and this statue is one of the most famous in France, worthy of a great pilgrimage. It would seem, pardoner, that all thy relics are worthy of ten times the price thou askest for them, Abélard said, and having so many holy relics thou wilt be glad to hear that the greatest relic perhaps of all has been discovered by the Crusaders in Nazareth, a phial containing a pint of the Virgin's milk.

At that moment the words: Sancte Thoma adiuva me, came from a far-off corner of the kitchen, and on looking thither every face changed colour, for nobody was to be seen. Be not afraid, said the pardoner, and he went whither the voice had spoken and uncovering a cage revealed to the company a grey bird with a red tail. This bird, said the pardoner, prays continuously, and his favourite prayers are Paternoster and Ave Maria, the two prayers most closely associated with our holy religion. The bird is among my merchandise, and if I do not put him up for sale in this kitchen it is because of the price that I am obliged to ask for him, having paid a very high price to possess him and spent many years rearing him in piety, if not in faith, though there is some reason to believe that he has faith in God. Let none think that a terrible heresy is involved in this belief. The Church will take into account that his utterances are often so fitted to the occasion that it is hard to doubt that he attaches some meaning to his words. A good, pious bird he is, without doubt, one that has never been known to indulge in evil speech, a habit that birds of his class often indulge in, not perhaps of their own fault but because of the society into which they have drifted. My bird's vocabulary I will guarantee to be altogether ecclesiastical, and his repertory includes not only the prayers I have

mentioned but some Latin hymns. I will guarantee him to repeat the Veni Sancte Spiritus without a fault; also the Regina Coeli, and—— Forgive me, good pardoner, but myself, and I think all here, would be glad to learn from thee why thou wert at pains to teach the bird prayers; for his own profit, or for ours, which? After having said our prayers we are allowed by the Church to think of other things, the pardoner answered; we cannot think always of heaven and hell, and I am truly grateful for the question that has been put to me by the good father; a more intelligent question I have rarely heard, for the value of that bird is in the fact that he prays all day. At the present moment, it is true, he is silent, but there can be little doubt that he is learning prayers, thinking them over in his silence, for he's always learning new prayers and brings out a new prayer when one least expects it. He is never satisfied, as we are, with sufficient piety; the word sufficient is unknown to him. I will avouch it, for by long living with my speaking bird I have been led to believe that he dreams prayers; our dreams are but echoes of thoughts that we have forgotten, that or something quite different; our dreams may be therefore memories of evil desires and acts, but my bird has no knowledge of evil. His dreams are pure dreams, his sleeping hours are prayerful, and the natural affection of the bird leads him to offer up his prayers for his master, for, poor bird, he knows well that himself cannot go into heaven, being but a bird. If my bird be not as I tell you, how else may we explain his love of his prayers, unless indeed we suppose him to be an angel incarnate. But that savours of heresy, and I would not advise anybody among us to harbour such a thought. My bird is but a bird, I don't offer him as anything else, but he is a unique bird, one that prays without ceasing, and his prayers will save his master's soul from the many thousand years of purgatory which his master's soul may be earning in this life. If that be so, these years melt away before the bird's prayers as wax melts before a fire. But a bird's prayers are not answered, Abélard interrupted. Good father, your question is an excellent one, and for it I thank you, for I have proof that a bird's prayers are granted. The one misdeed chargeable to

this bird is that finding the door of his cage open one morning he flew across the fields, but he had hardly crossed the first before he was pursued by a goshawk, and seeing that he could not escape by swiftness of wings he screamed aloud: Sancte Thoma, adiuva, and no sooner had these words passed his beak than the goshawk fell dead. Good father, the story I tell is the truth. Mine own eyes saw the bird pursued and saw him return repentant at having attempted an escape which nearly ended in his own death. That day he recited a chaplet of Paternosters and Ave Marias. How then—— Ah, scepticism always appears, I regret to say, in the religious; I read it in the good friar's eyes. Good friar no doubt he is, but his eyes are sceptical eyes. I, who have travelled far and seen all kinds and sorts of people, can read the thoughts that lie behind the eyes. Our friar is sceptical, as all friars are, of my miracle, a fault of all the religious, who believe only in their own miracles. I will say, therefore, no more about my bird.

The pardoner's voice was mournful, and excited pity, and won most of the company from Abélard to himself, and they begged of him to tell them more about his speaking bird, which has, said Abélard, uttered no more than four words up to the present. The two men stood looking at each other, Abélard seeing a man of middle height, broad-shouldered, deep-chested, with a great mane of black hair in which there was here and there a streak of grey, and in his forked beard, too, which was thick and black as his hair, there were a few grey hairs. Abélard saw a long, sun-tanned face with grey, piercing eyes watching him under bushy eyebrows. The pardoner's forehead was broad, the cheek-bones were high, and in his nose, of comely curve, were nostrils long and open. Abélard judged him to be a man between forty and fifty years, but still in the prime of life, able for a day's work with anyone, whether it was a day's mowing or a day's travelling in a forest, a pack on his back. The only sign of age was in his neck, which was full of veins and sinews. A good traveller he must be, for his trade demands it, but his legs are slender for long marching; and his feet? Abélard asked himself, and his eyes went down to the pardoner's feet, and

he considered them well. Good travelling feet, he said, but his ankles are slender like a woman's. A high instep, he added, and continued: a man who spoke the truth when he said that he had travelled far, and can read men's thoughts from their faces. One who can tell the morrow from the aspect of the stars and sky, one like the pedlar who came upon his trade by instinct, one unlike the pedlar in this much, that the day will come when he will hold his merchandise in less esteem than heretofore. A saint, maybe, in the making.

CHAP. XVIII.

THE women, who were still standing in their wet clothes, got a scolding for their imprudence. We shall not start to-morrow, he cried after them, and his fears were realised, for the news next morning was that Héloïse's cold was passing from her head to her chest. I knew that we should not be able to start to-day, Madelon. I cannot think how thou couldst be so stupid as to let her stand in her wet clothes. Go to her, attend upon her, let her have warm drinks, get her well; thou knowest that every day here is a danger. Madelon bowed her head, and Abélard turned to the gleemen with whom he sang and with whom he watched the weather, always in great anxiety lest the Canon might be following them with hirelings. Ah, if he were to overtake them in this inn!

His courage and his pride in himself were great; he stood so high in public esteem and his pupils and disciples were so numerous that he did not believe that anybody could prevail against him. But Fulbert was a canon of Notre-Dame and had many adherents. They would not be safe till they reached Orléans, and in obedience to the impulse of the moment he called up the staircase for news, and the answer he got from Madelon was that Héloïse was in her bed and would not be able to travel for the next few days. On the third, on the fourth, and on the fifth days the answer was the same, and when they rode from the inn on the sixth Madelon was still in doubt whether their departure was altogether a wise one. Women like Madelon only think of one thing at a

time, Abélard muttered; and she has forgotten the Canon, who may be at this moment enquiring us out at Étampes. But we are on horseback at last, and not more than an hour's ride from Orléans, he added, judging this to be so from the appearance of the forest, which had begun to dribble into fringes and scattered clumps of trees, as a city does into villages. All the country that lies before us, he said, was once forest, the residue of the great wilderness of Sologne, the desert lying along the left bank of the Loire whither the King and his nobles go for hunting. The clearances we are riding through were forest once, but corn is now all about us, a green country to-day, a yellow country in two months' time. But he spoke into deaf ears, for Héloïse's thoughts were not on the plain before them but on the kindly forest that had sheltered them, and her eyes falling at that moment on an oak, she said: is there anything in the world more beautiful than an oak showing against a blue sky? A moment after she added, speaking almost to herself: a young man before age has warped him. A masculine tree the oak certainly is, Abélard replied, and forgetful of her remark, began to speak his own thoughts, saying that the green country about them stretched without further interruption from the forest they had left behind to the very banks of the Loire, which they would come into sight of at the end of an hour's ride. Almost the first rise in the ground will show the river to us, and Héloïse answered: and I shall be glad to see the river, for one wearies of plains and low horizons. I like wide expanses, with hills in the background.

And they continued to talk in this manner while their horses plodded up a gentle acclivity with bent heads, as if they were asked to perform some heavy task, Héloïse waiting for the Loire, which did not come into view for another hour; and when it did flash into sight it was not the course of the river that captured her eyes, but a great barge sailing fast on a wind blowing from the east. She will reach Tours in three days, Abélard said; maybe less. And shall we sail in a barge, and will the sails be yellow or white? Héloïse asked, but seeing that he was deep in himself and averse from any interruption of his mood, she gave herself wholly over to an un-

aided admiration of the smooth, finely bending lines of a bluish river sweeping through a grey-green country, the right bank tame and cultivated, with some of the original forest here and there, and an almost immeasurable forest along the left bank, with scrub and marsh where the ground was low, great trees where it was high, her romantic imagination summoning to her mind the sound of the hunting horns echoing round the lakes and ponds as the hounds and the huntsmen pursued now fleeing deer, now wolves and bears. She knew from Abélard that there were no lions nor tigers in France, and she would have liked to have asked him about the King's hunting in the Sologne, but his humour did not seem to invite questions; so she persisted in her admiration of the river, seeing that it bent a little as it came round the town of Orléans, straightening out soon after into its seaward course, certain that the distance that her eyes embraced represented many leagues; many leagues lay between her and that blue-tinted line of forest, and nearly as many now lay between her and Paris. Towards that blue-tinted distance we shall be sailing to-morrow or the next day, she said to herself, and as they had by this time come into full view of the river, she began to hope that the ship that would take them would be one of the great two-masted ships with which the river was speckled, and that it would be borne along beautifully by pointed sails like wings. The ships go towards Nantes, towards the seas, sailing with sails crossed over, she said, and they come up from Nantes to Orléans with their long peaked sails in a line, making first for one shore and then for the other, gaining a little on each tack. She had seen boats perform the same feats on the Seine at Argenteuil, and knew that the task of working a boat against the wind was a slow one.

The city lay on the left under the low shore, the twin towers of the cathedral striking firmly against long droves of dove-coloured clouds through which the sun was breaking, illuminating the landscape, showing the line of the fields, spreading wonder and delight, bringing the sails of all the ships into relief, filling the river with reflections, and doing many other wonderful things that Héloïse hoped to remember; but so extraordinary and so numerous was the play of

light that she was sure she would have forgotten a great deal of what she was now seeing before Abélard thought fit to rouse out of his taciturnity. Of what can he be thinking? she asked herself, but refrained from asking him, and forgot him in a sudden wonder at a long, low island filled with fair trees, walks, and some houses, and a long bridge of many narrow arches, whose gently curving line was broken by roofs of shrines and dwellings, rising from high piers like the prows of ships, and defended by pointed turrets. Hast thou no eyes, Abélard, for the river and its city? she asked. And he answered her that he would have had eyes for both had be been able to rid his mind of Fulbert. But Fulbert would not follow us to Orléans? Héloïse asked quickly. For who would there be in Paris to tell him? And he answered her that although he had regretted at first the illness that had kept them for so many days at Saint-Jean-de-Braie, he was now disposed to look upon the delay as advantageous, for if Fulbert went to Orléans inspired by the thought that we should sail from thence, and got no news of us in any of the inns, he would return to Paris forthright. And to her question whether he thought that Fulbert had come to Orléans, Abélard answered that had Fulbert come to Orléans he would not have waited; getting no news of us here, he repeated, he would return to Paris at once. But if his thought should be: they are still on their way hither? she said. Then it will be bad for us, he answered, for we cannot resist, he being surrounded by hirelings.

It was then that Héloïse began to apprehend her lover's danger, and she rode by his side silent, seeing the city very distinctly but unable to appreciate the beauty of the trees, the acacias and the limes and the chestnuts that filled the Mail with perfume. There are no trees in Paris like these, she was about to say, but the words died on her lips, for Fulbert might dash out of a side street at any moment. If we get no tidings of him at The Red Dragon he has not followed us to Orléans, Abélard whispered to her as he helped her from her horse, and it seemed to her that her heart ceased to beat while he put inquiries to the innkeeper, but as these elicited no tidings regarding the Canon of Notre-Dame, she

drew an easier breath, and began to think that luck was on their side after all. In answer to his inquiry if he could get a ship to take them to Nantes the next day or the day after, the innkeeper told him that he could get one that very night, whereat the three were elated. Each ship takes six passengers and it looses as soon as the six have paid their fares, said the innkeeper. But the passengers, reverend sir, are often noisy and unruly, and you and the good sisters that are with you will suffer much in such company; and the price not being a large one you would do well to hire a ship for your use, for you will then be free to stop at different towns. There is much to see in Meung and Beaugency. At Meung there is a great abbey, and they are building a new church there designed by a young man of great promise. And our beautiful river has much to show for pleasure and instruction. But your horses, good sir, you will leave with me. I will care for them well. But should your stay at Blois, at Tours or at Nantes be a long one, I am ready to bid a good price for your horses. Whereupon Abélard said he would want his horses when he returned, which would be in a month. In a month a horse has time to eat up a great deal of his value, averred the innkeeper, and in a month's time horses will be more plentiful in Orléans than they are to-day, and Abélard allowed himself to be swayed by the innkeeper's arguments.

The sun is no longer at height, the afternoon has begun to steal upon us; remark, reverend sir, the shadows which are lengthening. It may be that you would like to rest yourselves at my inn, to eat and drink, and make a start to-morrow or the next day? If so, I shall not charge for the keep of your horses. You have not seen all our city, you have had but a mere glimpse of it. My rooms might tempt you to spend a few days in Orléans if you will deign to see them. Abélard thanked him, but feeling that Fulbert might be still on their traces, he decided to leave Orléans within the next hour if he could hire a ship to take them to Nantes. You will find plenty, reverend sir, lying by the wharf; but do not accept the first offer, for the avarice of these sailors is notorious; they will come down to half of the first price if you show firmness. Or if you would like it better, reverend sir, I will

take the matter into my hands, and your ship shall be ready to-morrow morning. Abélard thanked the innkeeper again and said that he would walk to the end of the wharf and look over the ships that might be lying by. Come, Sister Héloïse and Sister Madelon, I would have your advice about the ship that we shall travel in. And having taken the way to the wharf from the innkeeper, the three walked thither, finding themselves suddenly confronted by a dark-skinned man, portly and about the medium height, from whom all three felt a sudden aversion, owing perhaps to their fears of Fulbert. For the moment every corner was a hiding-place for a hireling. Moreover, the man's very courtesy roused their suspicions. Reverend sir, he began, may I say without intruding myself unduly upon your attention and on that of the good sisters who are with you, may I say that if your search is for a fast sailing ship that will take you to Blois in a day, to Tours in three, to Nantes in four, mine is the ship you are in search of. May I—— Wilt show me the ship that thou ownest? Abélard enquired abruptly. Most certainly, reverend sir, I will show you my ship; she lies alongside; and if you will do me the honour to step on board and overlook her, I shall be most happy; and if everything is not to your satisfaction it shall be made so as far as it is in my power, for I am but a poor skipper owning only a single ship, but the best, I can say truthfully, that lies at this end of the river, and it would not be too much of a brag were I to say that it is as good a ship as you will find in Nantes, where assemble all the good ships of the world. The best ships in the world are built at Nantes, and if thy ship is all thou sayest I ask nothing better than to hire her, thyself and thy crew; and the cost will be——? Reverend sir, my ship is at your service; any recompense that you make will be enough for me. Vain words are these, Abélard answered; one cannot be buyer and seller at the same time; the seller names his price, and the buyer accepts or declines. Whereupon the skipper, after eyeing Abélard sharply and turning over in his mind that he had come from Nantes and knew the prices, named a sum of money that seemed to Abélard a fair one considering the length of the journey. If thy ship has two sails, my good

man, the bargain is clinched. Two sails! replied the skipper, could I get you to Nantes without two? I was thinking, said the false friar, of the sisters, for this one looked to seeing the sails cross before the wind. And the skipper, taken aback, thinking that he had to do with fools, male and female, regretted that he had not asked much more, and invited them into a long, narrow ship that Abélard said would make fine way before the wind. But it is hard, he continued, to sink them enough into the water to save them from slipping backwards when sailing near to the wind. See this deep plank, sisters; when the ship's head is put up to the wind this plank is let down into the water, for without it we should not be able to tack. And these remarks restored the skipper's confidence in Abélard as one who might have been able to make a keen guess at the sum of money that it was right for him to pay for the voyage from Orléans to Nantes. It is pleasant to sail with one who can put his hand to a rudder, keeping the ship's head straight, he said, and all that you can do, sir. And now I will call my boy, who will divide the cabin, leaving half for the sisters and half for yourself. But to my thinking not much of your time will be spent in the cabin; in preference you will sleep on deck under the full moon to-night; but that is how it may please you. Have we loosed yet from the quay? Abélard asked, and the skipper answered: see, they are loosing already. A moment after the great rope came on board, and the long, narrow ship floated into the middle of the stream.

And all danger of meeting Fulbert being now past, the lovers fell to talking, Héloïse saying that she liked watching the boats go past at Argenteuil, their sails filling, bending the boats over. A lovely sight it is to see the boats bending over, but the boats at Argenteuil have not long, pointed sails like these. Hear how the water ripples past. She would have said a great deal more, but the skipper was by again, asking Abélard to take note of the pace the boat was making over and above the current, running, Abélard said, at the rate of a league an hour; we shall be at Meung, which is two leagues from Orléans, in not much over the hour. We shall be at Meung under the hour, the skipper answered, and may I not

land you, for if you have not seen the Abbey, one of the largest and finest in this part of the country, you should see it; and there is the new church that is being built alongside of the old one. We shall reach Beaugency before seven, so if you would like to spend an hour at Meung you have but to say the word. Abélard answered that he had matters to settle with the sisters and would tell him later. Madelon was certain that the Canon had not followed them; he is angry, and he can be very angry, she said, but he can be very lazy, too. But what if he be waiting at Meung? Héloïse asked. You did not know yourselves that you would stop there. Forget the Canon and live your lives according to your liking, was her advice to them. So when the square tower of the Port d'Amont rose up against the western sky, Abélard sought the skipper and said: there are not much more than four leagues between Meung and Beaugency, and with this wind we cannot fail to reach Beaugency before nine. We cannot, the skipper answered, and leaving Madelon on board, who was always happy with her rosary (her piety will relieve the skipper of any thoughts he may have formed about us, Abélard said), they walked for an hour or more in Meung, admiring its green gardens and the brook that flowed through the town turning many mills. Wherever they went they seemed to be always meeting mill wheels. A good little worker is this brook; it wearies never, turning the last mill as quickly as the first, Abélard said. And he called Héloïse's eyes to the church that the builders were just finishing, showing her the pointed arch that had come into fashion and praising the skill with which the architect harmonised the new with the old, for in his scheme the old round Romanesque tower did not seem out of keeping with the slim, mullioned windows. Reason coming to the aid of faith, Héloïse said. And after admiring the gravity of the round eleventh-century church and the gaiety of the new Gothic, they forgot all about faith and reason and wandered side by side along the river's bank under the shade of pleasant trees, forgetful of all else but themselves, till they were awakened from their dream by the skipper, who said: maybe it would be better

that we get up the sails, for the wind may change a little towards evening.

How like our sails are to swallows' wings, Héloïse said, and, Madelon, if thou wilt lay aside thy rosary—— I am always willing to lay it aside when the talk is in French, but when it is in Latin I might as well be saying my prayers. You would have me answer if our sails are like swallows' wings: the sails are peaked and so are the birds' wings, but the sails are yellow and the wings are black, and the wings move up and down and the sails are still. It would seem to me that there be more differences than likenesses, but that is the way always. And no answer coming to Héloïse to make, her eyes followed the countless swallows flying up and down the river, through the arches of the bridge and back again, skimming the surface of the water. A certain sign of rain, Madelon said; but there were hundreds, maybe thousands, of swallows in the sky, high up aloft, collecting, retiring, dividing, collecting again, some passing down to the river, others rising high out of sight. It seems, Héloïse said, that birds never tire of flying. It is by flying they get their living, said Madelon; nobody ever tires of that. All day long they have been flying, Héloïse continued, and before retiring to their roosts they are flying more madly than ever, as if to lose a minute were a loss. The swift, sudden, incomprehensible gyrations of the birds above contrasted with the steady flight of the swallows that flew back and forwards, their wings dipping the surface of the river as they passed through the arches and back again. Never was there such an evening of swallows, Abélard said, more because he wished to be at one with Héloïse's thoughts than because the birds interested him. An evening of swallows, he said, but those birds going up and down the river are not the true swallows; he was not certain that they were not bats, for the dusk was deepening, and it took him a long time to decide that the stronger-winged birds were aloft, the weaklings keeping to the surface of the river. The first brood cannot yet be flying, he mused, and fell to thinking of the many species of swallows, and to which might belong the birds that flew up and down the arches mechanically as soldiers at drill.

Look, Héloïse said, how the sunset is coming up, and raising their eyes from the river they saw a great herd or flock of rose-coloured clouds coming up from the west, reminding them of rose-coloured sheep returning to the fold driven by the shepherd. Madelon prattled, and the lovers thought of each other, of their love, of the destinies that had guided them, till remembering suddenly the rose-coloured sheep on high, they raised their eyes. But none was to be seen, all had vanished or had passed into the dun-coloured clouds in the east, out of which the moon rose. Are we in night or in day? Héloïse asked, and Abélard answered that these summer nights were short, the twilight lasting till dawn. Only two hours of transparent darkness, and then the dawn. Sing to me, she said; the dawn song with the burden: Ah God, ah God, the dawn! it comes so soon. But I have no lute, he answered. The sailors will lend thee a rote or gittern—— If I sing the skipper will know that we are fugitives. From an angry uncle, Héloïse said, and she sang the tune under her breath.

CHAP. XIX.

WHEN Abélard opened his eyes the summer dawn was breaking, soft as the bloom upon a peach, and on raising himself upon his elbow he overlooked the ship from bow to stern. Héloïse and Madelon lay side by side, wrapped in their cloaks, deep in slumber, and the slumber that had overtaken the crew in the bow seemed hardly less deep. A long day is before us, and only five or six leagues between Beaugency and Blois: even if the wind should fail us, those stout fellows now sleeping will be working at the oars, bringing us easily to the wharf at Blois during the course of the afternoon; that is why they are with us, in case the wind should drop. His head fell back upon his pillow, and when he awoke again the sun was bright upon the river, all dancing silver, and the boatmen were eating their breakfast before making ready the sails for departure.

You would do well, said the skipper, good sir, to seek your breakfast in the town. The inns are open, and there is no

need to hurry back to us after breakfast, for these summer days are long. You will dine at the inn at Blois and sleep in a bed, if you wish it, but it seems that none of you have slept too badly upon the deck. And when all the skipper had said was related, the cunning of the peasant awoke in Madelon, who said that she would feign sickness, and keep watch; for should the sailor, who has received his money, weigh anchor and return to Orléans, our plight would indeed be a pitiful one. I will keep watch, and you will bring some food back with you when yourselves have eaten and visited the town. And her words seeming wise to Abélard he made them known to the skipper, who shrugged his shoulders and said: it is just as you wish it, sir, and continued his own breakfast, leaving Héloïse and Abélard in doubt as to their conduct, which they soon forgot, so excellent was their appetite when the king of fishes, the shad, was laid before them: of more delicate flavour than the bass, better than the turbot, a fish that makes the sole seem common, said Abélard. The shad comes, he continued, to us in his prime in May; the glory of the Loire is the shad. Some mutton cutlets brown from the grill, smelling sweet of roasted fat and gravy, revived their appetites; in the sauce there was a flavour of onion, and they forgot the shad for a moment, and he did not return to their thoughts till a dish of asparagus was eaten and they sat together finishing the bottle of white wine for which Beaugency has always been famous since vines first came to France. And after this nutritious breakfast they went out into the town, gaping and gazing at the storied houses, very like those they had left behind in the rue des Chantres. It seemed to them that they could find happiness and contentment in any of the beautiful houses that they came across, one of those they had caught sight of coming up from the wharf, houses overlooking the river, from whose windows, Héloïse said, we could catch sight of our ship, for we would not be without one; and when weary of the hearth and the home we would loose and sail past all the towns that we shall see on our way to Nantes, past Nantes and down to the sea. And then? Abélard said. And then, she replied, we would dash over the sea waves as Jason did. Like Orpheus thou

wouldst sing at the prow. New horizons would open up and I should have seen the sea, a thing I have seen only through Madelon's eyes. She has spoken to me of the sea, telling me of the great rocks it roars about and the caverns it has worn among the rocks, but—— Here we are at the fortress that the skipper told us to go in search of, Abélard interrupted, the Tour de César, and having walked round it they made their way back through the narrow intricate streets to the river, pausing under the trees of the Mail to indulge their eyes with all the bend of the river and the bridge, as beautiful as the bridge at Orléans. The river is more beautiful here than it is at Orléans, Héloïse said; it wears a welcoming look, seeming almost to take an interest in its travellers and its towns. At that moment the bells of Saint-Cléry began singing, and the sound was borne by the breeze over the great wide smiling river. It would be beautiful to live here, Héloïse said again. But we must not forget Madelon's breakfast, Abélard remarked, thereby breaking the spell of the moment. We must go back and fetch her some breakfast at the inn at once; which they did, and found her hungry and glad to receive what they had brought her. The skipper, too, was glad to get away, and when they had passed under the bridge he bade them notice how deep the water was, how it whirled, creating dark whorls here and there, like those one sees in glass, great knots such as one meets in trees. Whirlpools, he said, these are, that have sucked down many a swimmer. As he talked the wind caught the sails, and they were carried past long, narrow islands and yellow sandbanks lined with tall reeds. It is among the reeds yonder that the shad loves to lie and bask, a fish worth catching, the skipper said. Well worth catching, Abélard answered, as we know well, for we ate of one to-day for breakfast.

And the men talked of the eating of shad and the drinking of Beaugency wine, Abélard admiring, while he talked, the sun driving shafts of light through the dove-grey clouds that enhanced the extraordinary silky blueness in the sky that day. The river, he thought, is in harmony with its sky and with its grey-green landscape. There is nothing a man would change, for God was in a good humour when he made

France. A puffing little wind brought them into view of some shallows, and the skipper said that the Loire often shifted its sands and made steering difficult, and Héloïse cried: look at the herons wading in the silt. And look, Abélard answered, at the gentle folk coming towards us on horseback with hawks on their wrists. But they are not going to hunt the herons? she asked; rooks or crows or choughs or jackdaws or magpies, but not herons? The beater will send up the herons, Abélard answered, as soon as the hawks are at pitch, and almost as he spoke the herons were driven from their fishing, and ascending high into the air the beautiful grey birds tried hard to keep above the hawks, knowing that their safety depended upon their doing so. But the swifter wings of the hawks carried them higher, and the ladies and gentlemen watched from their palfreys the stooping hawks, always forced to glide aside, for the spear-like heads of the herons were deftly raised to meet them. At last, with closed wings a hawk fell swifter than any arrow upon a wearied heron, bringing him to earth. The other heron, seemingly swifter of wing than the hawk, promised more exciting sport, and part of the company went away in pursuit, part remaining to capture the successful hawk. The falconer will find him tearing the heron open, Abélard explained, looking round from time to time, fearing an intruder, but recognising his keeper, who will approach very quietly, lest he should frighten the hawk. The hawk will allow himself to be taken by the jesses. And what will become of the heron? Héloïse asked. His brain will be awarded to the hawk as recompense for his flight, and some serf will boil or roast the heron for his supper. A wonderful match it was, Héloïse said, and I would like to see another flight, though the beautiful grey bird with long neck and head like a spear is dear to me. And then they talked of the other birds that the hawk might be entrusted to capture, Abélard saying that the best sport of all was afforded by the magpie, a cunning bird that flew from hedgerow to hedgerow with much wiliness before he was driven into crossing an open space where the hawk might strike. And there was talk, too, about the ducks and snipe that the hawk could catch if he were at pitch; and what is meant by being at pitch,

Abélard said, is when the hawk is high in the air, which might well be called at pounce, for the falcon does not fly after his birds, overtaking them like the goshawk; he waits on high for the birds to be put up for him, a good hawk understanding the game as well as the falconer. As their ship drew away on a fair wind they talked on about the keeping and breeding of hawks till the subject became wearisome, and their eyes roved over the grey-green valley, seeing long herds of red cattle with many bulls among them, for, said Madelon, there's nothing that the wolf fears so much as the bull; he may bite the bull's legs, but that matters little to the bull, for he very soon treads the life out of the wolf; and if a number of wolves come out of the forest to attack the herd, the heifers put the calves inside the ring, and then the bulls chase the wolves hither and thither, helped sometimes by the heifers, for a heifer will put up a good fight to save her calf. But the sheep? said Abélard. Well, the sheep know their danger and come into the circle if they get the chance, so while protecting their own heifers and calves the bulls save the sheep from the wolves, who never get more than a yoe that has wandered too far in search of a straying lamb. But do not the bulls fight each other for the possession of some beautiful heifer? They do indeed, and sometimes kill each other, which is a great loss, for no herd or flock would be safe but for the bulls. There's more forest in Brittany than here, and there's a good deal here as you can see for yourselves; it pops up, for, however much you may strive to clear away the forest, wherever forest has once been it is likely to come up again. One year's seed makes seven years' weed, as the saying is, and it will take many centuries, perhaps thousands of years, to free France from forest and wolves. An acre of forest gone means a wolf gone with it.

We shall be alongside of the wharf at Blois in another half-hour if this wind holds up, a vexing, puffing wind it is, that carries us a little way and then leaves us, said the skipper; but it comes again; look, and their eyes following his hand they saw a great hill rising steeply above the river, and began to think of their dinner in one of the inns at Blois. Wilt thou come with us? Abélard whispered to Madelon.

No, she said, but thank you kindly, master and mistress; I will remain where I am, having no dependence upon our skipper, who would play us a trick if he could. Go to your dinner, but do not forget to bring back some for Madelon. Is it, Héloïse asked, because she knows that we would like to be alone that she refuses to come with us, or does she suspect the skipper? That we shall never know, Abélard answered, for Madelon herself may not know the reason of her obstinacy. But we must get the name of an inn from the skipper.

From the terrace of the inn he recommended to them, and on which they dined later, they could see a great prospect, the forest of Blois and the marshes and scrub of the Sologne. It put thoughts into Héloïse's mind of the herons they had seen chased by the hawks that morning. One of the mated birds will never fish again in those marshes, more beautiful to a heron than a vineyard or a rose garden, she said. Both may have been killed, he answered, but let us not forget Madelon's dinner in our sorrow for a heron's death. Whereupon a basket was purchased, and with it on her arm Héloïse wandered with Abélard about the steep streets of Blois, up and down the many staircases that led from terrace to terrace, filling the basket with dainties, for Madelon remained at her post in spite of the skipper's efforts to persuade her to go ashore to listen to some gleemen who were seeking to attract a crowd at the bridge-head.

Wilt sing a song, Abélard, and shame these gleemen as thou didst shame those who came to sing in the rue des Chantres? said Héloïse, and Abélard, though afraid that if he were to play the lute he would betray himself to the gleemen as being no friar but one of themselves, could not keep himself from talking to his whilom companions of the road, thereby awakening suspicions of him and prompting them to offer him a lute on which he accompanied himself so well that one of the gleemen said: no friar art thou, but a brother, whereat Abélard laughed and answered them: before I was a friar I was a gleeman like yourselves, but the grace of God was vouchsafed to me and I laid down the lute; and the songs that I wrote in my unregenerate days haunt my mind and give me pain. That is why I am now a wandering friar, for were

I to become a priest my fate might be to end in a bishopric, and what then would be my sorrow were I to hear my own songs of old days sung before me? A joke thou art putting upon us truly, for no bishop or gleeman art thou, cried a player on the gittern, for if thou wert a gleeman thou couldst play the gittern and the sackbut. I can play both, Abélard answered, rejoicing inwardly in the imbroglio he was weaving; on all the instruments you can bring to me: the lute, the vielle, the gittern, the sackbut, or the virginals, bring them all. Give him thy gittern, Jacques, cried another gleeman, and we will see what he will do with it. And Abélard striking a chord upon it, they cried: that is a fair one. And Abélard striking another one: that is a fairer one still, they said, and now we believe that some part of thy story be true. A lutanist thou art for certain, but of thy friarhood we will say nothing. So said the vagrants, mingling with their talk so much laughter and rough jests that a hermit on his way from the river to his cell stopped to listen to them. Many lutanists pass this way, he said, but seldom a better one than this friar. Whereupon Abélard and the gleemen laid their minds to the preparation of a concert, but just as they finished playing some opening chords and were about to sing, a sound of voices was heard in the distance and afterwards the thumping of staves in the roadway, a sound well known to the gleemen, who said: pilgrims are coming, and they will give us a fine audience. Nor did the gleemen speak more than the truth, for tired of their own singing the pilgrims were glad to stop to hear music less mournful than their own; and they enjoyed the minstrelsy, forgetful of death and burial, till the sound of a bell coming towards them reminded them of the approach of a disease easily contracted.

A leper is on his way hither, let us begone, they cried, but Abélard said: a leper is in need of music as well as you. And when the sick, sad man came into sight, Abélard hailed him cheerfully: wouldst hear music, good friend? he asked. And the leper replied: I would indeed, for I was a gleeman before I was a leper; but my fingers have gone from me and now I can do no more than to rattle a bell to warn people of my approach. There were gleemen here just now, but

they fled from me like all mankind; I heard lutes. But they have gone. If I had a lute I would sing to thee, good friend, Abélard said. I had hoped to hear a little music, for while listening I would forget my misfortune. The leper began to weep. I would sing to thee, Abélard said again, if I had a lute, and my singing and playing is as good and better than that of those who have run away; but I have no lute. But if you were a gleeman you have exchanged the motley for a friar's hood. I have done that, Abélard answered, for life is brief and eternity is long. Give me bread, said the leper. We have none, Abélard replied, but will leave some money on this stone. None will accept money from me, the leper replied. Then since I have no bread and money is of no use to thee, I'll sing thee a song. A true gleeman you are, though you wear a friar's hood, and I thank you for your music and will sing it on my sorrowful way. Since thou thinkest well of my music, good friend, do thou do the musician a service. What service can I do you, sir? the leper answered. Thou who wanderest all over the country must know the inns, Abélard said; tell me the best inn between this and Tours, which marks our journey's end. You will find, sir, no good inns between this and Tours, but a good monastery, with kindly monks, who will let you and your sisters in Jesus Christ sleep in the guest-chamber. There is too little straw in the leper chamber, but why do I complain, for I have to face evil and eviller days till God takes me. The bell tinkled out of hearing, and Abélard, like one in a dream, returned to the ship. The breeze, said the skipper, that has just sprung up will take us to Tours before evening, if it lasts.

Very soon they began to pass by yellow sandbanks and green islands, with osier beds; deserted islands they seemed all to be, save for one cow, which came down to the water's edge and gazed at the passing boat with moist eyes. Does she wish, Abélard asked the skipper, to come on board? No, the skipper answered, but they have forgotten to milk her. We might perform that kind office for her; and landing one of his sailors with a pail, the animal was relieved of her pain. But of a theft they are certainly guilty, Héloïse said. Children may lack milk to-night, Madelon added. We shall lack

a breeze to take us into Tours, the skipper muttered, and he began to wonder if the dropping of the wind was sent by God for their punishment. The wind freshened a little but dropped again, and with the sunset it died languid on the river opposite a great monastery that tempted Abélard and Héloïse on shore, this time with Madelon, for, he said, we are within a few miles of Tours, and it would not be worth the skipper's while to cheat us; moreover, he would have to get out his oars to do so, for there will be no wind to-night to take him up the river. And no doubt yonder is the hospitable monastery the leper spoke to us of, Abélard said to Héloïse, as they made their way up the stately park. But neither their knocking nor their words, spoken through the grating, persuaded the porter to open to them. The monastery is closed for the night, he said; and they protested in vain. The monastery is closed for the night, the porter answered again and again, and slammed back the slide, leaving the friar and his nuns to find their way past the great firs, whose shelving branches seemed to be the roosts of innumerable peacocks, ghostly birds in the mild moonlight, whose long white tails set Madelon crying: ghosts or angels! let us away; and her cries, awakening the peacocks, set them all screaming, till Abélard began to think that the angels beyond the stars could not fail to hear.

CHAP. XX.

HÉLOÏSE had wooed sleep continuously and from side to side, but the hot, breathless night kept her awake, and at last, too weary to try to sleep again, she rose from the deck and, leaning over the taffrail, looked down the river, now wide as a great lake. A scent of peppermint and sedges came across the water, and from time to time another scent roused her, and she turned to ask Abélard whence it came. But Abélard slept, and it was Madelon who told her that the pungent odour was of the sea, blown up from the great estuary by the fitful breeze. For on these wide waters the breeze never wholly dies. She could hear it stirring in the

reeds that filled the bays and inlets of the green islands, keeping the sleepy ducks awake; and her thoughts being set any whither and no whither, she remembered that she had seen wild ducks at sundown swimming in and out of the reeds followed by downy broods. A heron too had come down the sky and settled himself in a quiet corner to take his rest on one leg (his spear-like head hidden under his wing), for it is thus that birds rest themselves. From birds and their habits her thoughts moved on to flowers, for they were nearing the month when the river wears yellow and white lilies in all its quiet backwaters, and the dikes out on the marsh are lined with long-bladed leaves, whose austerity is atoned for by a furled blue flower of delicate hue. How beautiful the earth is in May, she said, surpassing by far the heavens; and her eyes sought the twin towers of the cathedral in the grey moonlight, for on the morrow they would go straight to the Cathedral to ask for tidings of Denise, Abélard's sister, and Alan, his brother-in-law. Or maybe they would have to call at all the inns, for they knew no more than that Denise and Alan would be in Tours at the end of May. For it was she who wrote to Abélard saying that as they had not seen each other for some years, it would be well that they should contrive to meet at Tours, a sort of half-way house. All families, she said in her letter, should forgather from time to time. And Abélard was overjoyed, writing: we will meet in Tours, thereby setting Héloïse wondering why he liked to meet his family in Tours rather than in Nantes. She had noticed that he talked of his relations with feeling and interest in Paris and that it was not till the time approached for him to meet them that he sat apart brooding (if he were not asleep), his gloom increasing and his customary gaiety failing him altogether on the way from Blois to Tours. He likes to talk of his country, she said to herself, and he takes pleasure in remembrances of Brittany and its people, but any thought of finding himself standing in its fields distresses him. How is this, why is this, and will he ever tell me? Does he know himself?

From time to time the lapping of the water against the ship's side reached her ears, and she had forgotten everything

but running tide and evanescent distances, when Madelon's jarring voice begged her to lie down beside her and try to get to sleep. To-morrow will be a big day for both of us, she said, lifting her head out of her rug; Abélard will be by to see us through it, but he'll be anxious to get back to his lecture hall in Paris, and—— Sleep seemed to have fallen on both of them suddenly, for when their eyes opened the river was laughing silver under the sunny sky. We must be at Tours, cried Madelon, and the women began to talk of the search they would be engaged in for the greater part of the day perhaps. We shall have to ask, Madelon said, at the cathedral first of all, and then at all the inns. There'll be weariness enough in our legs, I'll warrant, before we find them. And it was just as she said, walking till midday from inn to inn, from church to church, meeting blank faces and vague answers, the upshot being that the innkeepers and clerics had not heard of any travellers from Nantes answering to Abélard's description of his sister and brother-in-law.

It was on one of these journeys up and down and round about the city of Tours that Héloïse and Madelon heard Abélard calling them back, and turning they saw that he had stopped to speak to a small woman and a tall man. Whom may these be? said Madelon, and a moment after Abélard began to tell how he had only just escaped passing his sister in the street without seeing her. If it hadn't been for Alan, he said, who is as tall as a steeple, we might have walked once more all the way round Tours missing them. Alan and Denise waited for Abélard to tell them who Héloïse and Madelon were, but he could not tell Héloïse's story in her hearing, and being embarrassed as to how he should begin it, he spoke some vain words, breaking off suddenly, saying to Héloïse: Alan will walk in front with thee and Madelon; I have important matter to talk with Denise. The words: with Denise, drew Héloïse's eyes to Abélard's sister, in whom she discovered very little real likeness to Abélard. The very last person I should have thought to be Abélard's sister. And as she walked on in front with Alan and Madelon, the words: Abélard's brow shorn of its significance, came into her mind; Abélard over again with all that is noble and inspiring left out. While

speaking on matters of no interest to her, she remembered that her lover's eyes were penetrating and far-reaching, and she contrasted them with Denise's eyes, which she was constrained to admit were not unlike his, but shallow, almost foolish eyes. Good and kind she doubtless is, and there's no reason why we should not like each other. Her voice, too, she said to herself, is the same temper as Pierre's, and she being of cheerful mind we shall live together pleasantly. But it is strange that two human beings should be so alike yet so unlike. Now they are talking about me, and I must talk to Alan.

Denise, said Abélard, I have a story to tell, so let us walk slowly, for I would have thee hear it all before we reach the inn whither, I suppose, we are going for dinner. Denise answered him that the inn they were staying at was at the other end of Tours, built, she said, where the bank is higher, and overlooks the river. But a eulogy of the Loire seeming to Abélard to be out of place at the moment he was about to confide important matters, he said, with a change of voice that caused Denise to quake: I have a story to tell; thereby getting her attention at last, he related how Héloïse had thrown herself at his feet at the end of a lecture. Denise forgot the view of the Loire from the windows of the inn, and he remembered that he had always liked his sister, despite their differences of temperament, Denise being interested in practical things, his thoughts being engaged exclusively by ideas. All the same, it was to Denise that he wrote whenever he sent a letter to Brittany, and it was Abélard she singled out whenever she spoke of her brothers. Héloïse is very striking, Denise interposed, and it doesn't surprise me that she should have won thy love, though I never thought that any woman would be so fortunate. Abélard thanked his sister with a faint pressure of his hand for her words. She is now about two months gone, he said, and Denise repeated: only two months; and she began to ask for details till once more she saw that she was annoying her brother, and hoping to mend matters she said: thou'lt marry her in Nantes? Nothing is settled, Abélard replied sharply, again frightening his sister, who quaked like a sheep in front of a storm. For what

reason, he asked, should I marry? But if you love each other—— Let us not waste time talking, Denise, of what cannot be. I shall be ordained, I hope, within the next year or two. But does she know, that thou art going to abandon her? Abandon her, Denise? There is neither question of abandonment nor marriage. And in the hope of enlightening her he related his own place in the world at present and his ambitions, saying that these could not be gratified outside of the Church. I am, it is true, thought by many to be the greatest philosopher that has ever lived. And so thou art, cried Denise; thy fame has reached Brittany, and we often talk of thee as having surpassed all that have gone before. When people speak of me as the greatest philosopher in the world, he answered, it may be that they are right, indeed I think they are, but my admirers are not satisfied with that share of praise; they would have it that I am the greatest philosopher that ever lived, afflicting me—— And how dost thou answer the praise that afflicts thee? Denise asked. I ask them if they have read about the Greek philosophers, and when the answer returned to me is: no, I tell them that if they were to read the works of Plato and Aristotle they would be able to appreciate how insignificant the present is compared with the past. Humility is thy fault, Pierre, the admiring sister answered. Every man is aware of his worth, Abélard replied; the difference between me and other men is that I have been at pains to understand Plato and myself. But let us not waste time discussing Plato and Aristotle. Héloïse knows then that thou'rt about to enter the Church? Denise asked, and Abélard would just as lief that this question had not been put to him, but he answered it fairly, and Denise replied: I never heard before of a girl who was willing to sacrifice herself to her lover's ambition. Thou'rt wiser to-day then than thou wert yesterday, Denise, and as I am going to ask thee to take charge of Héloïse for the next year, it is important that thou shouldst know all. Héloïse wants me to enter the Church, but speak no word of this to her, for to do so could not fail to awake dissensions that I may have to come from Paris to Brittany to settle. But a marriage will reconcile thee to Fulbert, Denise interposed,

and immediately afterwards she added: canons of Notre-Dame are rich, whereas—— We are wasting time, Denise, as thou couldst not fail to understand if it were possible for me to tell the whole story. But I know the story, she said; thou hast told it to me. One may tell the truth as far as it can be told in a few minutes, Denise, Abélard answered, and it was with difficulty that he restrained his temper; but knowing himself to be dependent on his sister he kept it at bay, saying: I shall be ordained in a year, or maybe two years; some delay there may be, but—— Why should there be delay? Denise interrupted. To make that plain to thee, Denise, I should have to tell thee that there are two philosophies at present in Paris, Nominalism and Realism, and that Nominalism in its extreme form has been declared to be heretical. Even the mitigated Nominalism that I teach is suspected. I hope, Pierre, that thou wilt never teach anything contrary to the doctrines of our holy Church, for the Church is all-powerful. Whosoever comes to the grapple with Saint Peter gets a fall for his pains. Thou'lt remember that thou hast a sister living in Brittany, a country devoted to the Church, and if it became known that her brother was guilty of heresy—— Denise, Denise, thou'rt putting me past my patience; matters so subtly implicated as these cannot be explained in the short journey from one inn to another. I beseech thee to acquaint thyself with the facts; thou hast an excellent understanding, and all the rest will come to thee in time. But the two philosophies on which the world depends cannot be discussed quite thoroughly, as I have said, by passengers on their way from one inn to another. I shall come to Brittany to see Héloïse and to see my child at the end of the year, when Héloïse has come into her figure. I don't think that a husband considers his wife's figure; he is too overjoyed that she has borne him a child. My dear Denise, perhaps I was wrong to use the words: as soon as Héloïse has come into her figure, but the words are not mine, they are Héloïse's own. She has forbidden me to come to Brittany till—— But there is no reason why I should repeat words that offend thee, my object being not to offend but to ask a favour. A very strange phrase for a young woman to speak,

and of all, in her condition, Denise answered, her alarm having worn off. But, Pierre, thou wast always strange among us, different from thy brothers from the very beginning, giving up all thy lands to us so that thou mightst wander the world over and teach; so it is not strange that thou shouldst have met one like thyself, and in meeting Héloïse thou hast met thine own image and likeness, so it would seem to me.

Now I am beginning to hear again the Denise whom I left behind in Brittany years ago. Thou'lt do all that I ask thee? Thou'lt rely upon me and believe in me, sister? Abélard said, drawing Denise closer to him. And lifting fond eyes to his she answered: Pierre, I believe in thee; and give no heed to the poverty of my words, for they are not myself; but thy words are thyself. And surprised at this sudden comprehension, which endeared him to his sister even to asking her for some account of her life in Brittany since he had been away, Abélard said: all I have heard of thee, Denise, is the occasional birth of children. Yes, she answered; I have had too many. Thou hast written books, and I've had children. And that is the way of life in some form or another. Abélard was about to speak of abstinence and of those days in the month when the womb is not fruitful, but some random thought led him to speak of the tall, silent, lean man, whose mind was always upon his farm, upon its crops and beasts. But it would have been strange if his sister had thought of another man, she being what she was, and he fell to thinking that they were beyond each other's ken, or only faintly visible to each other. Had she not said: thou wert always strange, giving up thy lands so that thou mightst be freer to wander the world over, teaching, and she had added that she hoped he would teach nothing that the Church did not approve, not understanding that the instinct of teaching is but the fruition of a man's belief in the truth of his ideas. Such was the origin of his teaching, but he had learnt long ago that he was an exception, and that the interest of many teachers is not in their own ideas, for they have none, but in giving utterance to current commonplaces. All the same, it was strange that his sister should have allowed her husband to use her so wantonly, and on his speaking to her of the folly

of many children, she related her misadventures—— So-and-so was not wanted and his sister was not sought for, Abélard listening with a superciliousness on his lips that she recognised and that caused her to break off suddenly, saying: but thou'rt at fault even as we; and Abélard answered: it was not my will but her will. Thou tellest me strange stories, Pierre, but thy life has always been different from other men's, and what befalls thee is exceptional always. And that is why I believe thee.

A moment later they overtook Héloïse and Madelon. Yes, my husband speaks Breton, Denise said to Héloïse, but he speaks French too. Speak to Héloïse in French, Alan. And the long, lean man replied with a few monosyllables. Abélard, cried Héloïse, Alan has twelve oxen in his byre for the farm work, and the garden is full of hives and I shall live the life of the country, watching it from season to season like Virgil. All I know of the country, Alan, she said, detaining him, is from books, and the few sights of it that show in the window of the company-room in the rue des Chantres. The labourers on the farm sleep on couches all round a kitchen, Abélard, just like the kitchen we saw at Saint-Jean-de-Braie; and there is a spiral staircase leading to Denise's rooms. The dais on which the table is set—— But, Héloïse, I know my own country, Abélard said; Le Pallet and its farmhouses are commonplace to me. A cloud of disappointment rose up in Héloïse's face, but it quickly disappeared and she continued to ply Alan with questions.

It was at the inn, in answer to a remark dropped by Denise, that Abélard asked his sister for news of their father and mother, who had by mutual consent broken the marriage bond and retired into the religious life, one to a monastery and the other to a nunnery within hail almost of each other; and in reply to Héloïse as to why Béranger and Lucie had taken this step, Denise told her that Béranger, their father, had been a soldier in the service of Huet IV., but feeling that his life with the world was closed, and his wife feeling the same, both had judged it wise to devote their old age to making their souls ready for God's acceptance in the life to come. But did Pierre never tell thee, Héloïse, that his father and

mother had entered the religious life? Denise asked. No; this is the first time I have heard it, Héloïse answered, and Denise raised her eyes and looked at her brother, who replied somewhat sharply: Denise, thy face is doubtful, as if I were guilty of withholding something from Héloïse. Of what matter can it be to her that our father and mother retired to monastery and convent? None, so long as thou dost not leave me for a monastery, Héloïse answered gaily. Whereupon Denise asked her brother when he would be ready to start for Brittany. To-morrow or the next day, which? Since I had the good fortune to meet thee in Tours it seems to me needless that I should follow you back to Brittany, Abélard replied, knowing as I do that Héloïse will be well cared for. But can it be that thou art not coming to Brittany with us and that we are about to part now, to-day or to-morrow? Héloïse cried. Was it this parting thou wert brooding in the ship coming from Blois? So this is thy secret. Héloïse, I will talk privately with thee, and if it seems wise to thee that I should not leave thee here but follow on to Brittany, so it shall be. Then do thy best, Denise said, to persuade him, for his father and mother will be grieved to hear that he came more than half-way, only to turn back. We will leave you to persuade him; we have business in the city, and in thy place, Pierre, I would take Héloïse into the fields, where she can snuff the meadowsweet and become winsome again. Talk is easier indoors than in the fields, Abélard answered her, and feeling that her words had not met with his approval, she said many others to gain it, till at last his impatience frightened her out of the room with her husband and Madelon.

When the door closed behind them, Abélard and Héloïse were standing by the window overlooking the Loire without words to praise or even eyes to see the great sunlit river and the low-lying undulating country in which herds of cattle grazed between belts and patches of forest. Nor had they a single thought for the low horizon melting into violet, nor for the sails of shipping going back and forth; all their minds were intent on themselves, on each other, on the future, on the past. Art thou going to leave me at Tours? Héloïse asked,

and Abélard answered her stupidly, great man though he was, for the emotion of the moment exceeded his intelligence. Denise talks always, he said, without thought, and is therefore often tiresome to hear. It annoyed me to hear her speak of my father and mother who, having entered the religious life, would not understand that in opposing certain bishops I would raise man's soul from the common sensuality of prayer, as we saw at Saint-Jean-de-Braie. My father and mother would not understand me, and to meet them would be painful to me and it would be painful to them. We had better remain apart from those who cannot share our thoughts. But hast no thought for the country in which thou wast born? Héloïse asked, for the town on the steep hill-side above the river, shaded at the bend with poplar-trees? Alan has been telling thee of Le Pallet, he answered, and before long he had dropped in spite of himself into a second discourse, asking Héloïse if he could love a people who were prone to hate everything that he loved and to love what he hated, and when she answered him: but the country, the forest, the river, the sails, and the skies? I could not see the whole of Brittany, every field and every laneway, every garden, every tree, every orchard, were I to give my whole life to the quest, he said, and waited for Héloïse to answer him; but although she heard him, her mind was not engaged with what he said, for she was thinking of her loss, and she did not awake from her reverie till he told her that if he were to follow her to Brittany he would be detained there for many days, perhaps many weeks, and during that long while his pupils and disciples would be looking round like hounds for the huntsman to lead them unto the scent they had lost. Even now his presence was required in Paris to put a stop to the stories that were no doubt being told about them: if thy presence be needed in Paris, she said, go thither at once, delay not a day nor an hour; go, for though thou art dear to me there is one thing dearer than thyself—thy glory.

End of Vol. 1.